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The Life and Works
of
Alfred Lord Tennyson

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOLUME II



*Study at Farringford,
from a drawing by W. B. Gardner.*

Alfred Lord Tennyson

A Memoir

BY HIS SON

I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure !

VOLUME II

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Great rejoicings of the people and hero-worship of Simon Stevin,¹ S on the banners, and names, busts and statues of all the Flanders great men, statesmen, sculptors, poets, etc. in an inner square within the great square. Horsemen riding in a circle for prize. High tower and clock in great square, picturesque groups in Cathedral, motioned from the seats we had taken opposite pulpit, depart to F. de Blé, dinner in salle—affected Englishwoman whom I took for Belge or German opposite, hot nervous night with me. Man “hemmed” overhead enough to shake the walls of Jericho.

August 3rd. Off to Grand Hôtel de Flandre, monkey, pleasant folk, commissionaire, pharmacien and opticien. J. Arteveld’s house, town-hall very fine, musée not good, go to Louvain, Hôtel de Suède, new town-hall, old café, row of poplars, nervous night.

August 4th. Off to Liège, two sons of Sir Robert Peel, Hôtel d’Angleterre good, money changed, too soon for rail which came very late, pretty scenery, Chaudefontaine, old man and little boy, railway bordered with young acacias. Cologne, Hôtel de Cologne, rooms overlooking moonlit Rhine, hotel full of light and festival, pillaring its lights in the quiet water, bridge of boats, three steamers lying quietly below windows, not quite four hours’ sleep.

¹ Born in the sixteenth century at Bruges, and a great mathematician and mechanic.

August 5th. Woke at 5 or earlier, clash and clang of steamboat departure under me, walk on the quay, Cathedral splendid but to my mind too narrow for its length.

“ Gaspar and Melchior and Balthazar
Came to Cologne on the broad-breasted Rhine,
And founded there a temple which is yet
A fragment, but the wonder of the world.”

Embark, the bore of the Rhine, three Hyde Park drawling snobs, deck very hot, Nonnenwerth and Drachenfels, sad recollections; Coblentz, horrid row, king of Holland, shuffled off to the Rheinischerhof, stupid hotel. Coblentz as hateful as it was long years before, over the bridge to the Cheval Blanc, coffee there, back again, the bridge opening islanded us in the river.

August 6th. Off again by boat, three drawlers departed at Mainz, talk about language with Germans, sad old city of Worms among poplars, reach Mannheim, Hôtel de l'Europe, take a dark walk among shrubberies with M.

August 7th. Early next morning off by rail to Kehl, confusion about the two railways, douane, stop and see Cathedral, nave magnificent, rail to Basle, Three Kings, green swift Rhine roaring against the piers, Swiss fountain.

August 8th. Café in room, off by diligence to Lucerne, vines, agreeable Swiss young lady to whom I quoted Goethe and she spouted

William Tell, sorry to lose her, see Righi and Pilatus in the distance, walk before diligence but get in again, pass bridge over swift green stream, bureau, go to Schweizerhof, room at top of house, look out in the night and see the lake marbled with clouds, gabble of servants, bad night.

August 9th. Walk up the hill above the town, churchyard, innumerable gilt crosses, go to a villa, lie on the grass, return a different way from M., cross a part of the lake, walk back.

August 10th. Strolled about the painted bridges, M. met his friend, we bought Keller's map, off by 2 o'clock steamer to Weggis, hired a horse up the Righi, looked over and saw the little coves and wooded shores and villages under vast red ribs of rock, very fine, dismissed my horse at the Bains where we entered with an Englishman and found peasants waltzing, gave two francs to boy who had ordered beds, summit, crowd of people, very feeble sunset, tea, infernal chatter as of innumerable apes.

August 11th. Sunrise, strange look of clouds packed on the lake of Egeri, far off Jungfrau looking as if delicately pencilled. Rossberg, Küsnacht, breakfast, began to descend at 9, strange aspect of hill, cloud, and snow, as if the mountains were on fire, watch the clouds opening and shutting as we go down, and making framed pictures of the lake, etc., long hot descent, dined at Weggis, landlady takes me

out to select live fish for dinner, I am too tender-hearted so we go without fish, boat touches, off to Fluelen, very sleepy, carriage road to Italy, Tell's chapel, go in to church, return to Sweizerhof.

August 12th. Lake, guide and boat to Alpnach, hire voiture up the vale of Sarnen, walk a little before, get in, nothing very remarkable, arrive at Lungern, pretty green Alpine "thal" shut in with steep cliffs, one long waterfall, jolly old Radical who abused Dr. Arnold, over the hills to Meyringen, home (after having seen Lauterbrunnen and the Bernese Alps, the best things in the tour).

To Edward FitzGerald

CHELTENHAM, Nov. 12th, 1846.

Well, Moxon went to Switzerland; saw Blanc, he was very sulky, kept his nightcap on, doff'd it one morning when I was knocked up out of bed to look at him at four o'clock, the glance I gave did not by any means repay me for the toil of travelling to see him. Two other things I *did* see in Switzerland, the stateliest bits of landskip I ever saw, one was a look down on the valley of Lauterbrunnen while we were descending from the Wengern Alp, the other a view of the Bernese Alps: don't think that I am going to describe them. Let it suffice that I was so satisfied with the size of crags that

(Moxon being gone on before in vertigo and leaning on the arm of the guide) I *laughed* by myself. I was satisfied with the size of crags, but mountains, great mountains disappointed me.

* * * I called on Dickens at Lausanne who was very hospitable, and gave us biscuits (a rare luxury on the Continent, not such as are sweet and soft, but hard and unsweet) and a flask of Liebfraumilch, which is being interpreted "Virginis lac," as I dare say you know.

I have just got *Festus*; order it and read. You will most likely find it a great bore, but there are really *very grand* things in *Festus*.

Ever thine, A. T.

*Letters to Mrs. Burton (the wife of the patron
of Dr. Tennyson's living of Somersby)*

Tuesday, Nov. 24th [1846].

MY DEAR MRS. BURTON,

Nothing could be sweeter than Cathy's Somersby violets, and doubt not but that I shall keep them as a sacred treasure. The violets of one's native place gathered by the hands of a pure innocent child must needs be precious to me, and indeed I would have acknowledged the receipt of them and sent her a thousand loves and kisses before now, but there were several reasons why I did not write which it is of no

use troubling you with ; only I pray you kiss her for me very sweetly on lip and cheek and forehead, and assure her of my gratitude. I love all children, but I loved little Cathy par excellence by a kind of instinct when I saw her first. Do as you choose about the miniatures, but I am told that you have had illness in your house and it would make me uncomfortable to cause you any kind of trouble. I am here in London on a visit to a friend of mine at 6 Michael's Grove, Brompton. People fête and dine me every day but I am somewhat unwell and out of spirits : meanwhile I trust that your own health is improved, and that you are prosperous and happy. Farewell and believe me
 Ever yours truly, A. TENNYSON.

10 ST. JAMES' SQUARE, *Jan. 4th*, 1847.

MY DEAR MRS. BURTON,

The miniatures which you have sent we will treasure as precious memorials of our shortlived acquaintanceship : not that they do either you or the child full justice. Nature, without doubt, has been much more bountiful to you both than the artist : however the portraits are not unlike and moreover well-painted. I am sorry to learn from some fragments of your letter to Emily, which she read to me, that you are not altogether satisfied with the world about

you. Pray keep up your spirits in the wilderness of Lincolnshire. I trust that we shall all meet again, and meanwhile may your New Year be happy. Truly do I wish it may be so. You know wise men say that our happiness lies in our own hands: and therefore do you make the best of things about you, not only for the sake of husband and children, but of your friends here, who live in the hope of re-seeing you, among whom count upon myself as ever yours,

A. TENNYSON.

MY DEAR MRS. BURTON,

I am very much grieved that your letter reached me so late. I had left Umberslade and was visiting at two or three places in Warwickshire, and as I had given orders for any letter that came to be forwarded to Cheltenham, I have only just now on arriving received yours. I shall be very happy to be god-father to your little one, and so I am sure will Charles; he is not here but in town, but he shall be written to to-day, and there is no doubt of his compliance with your kind and flattering proposal: only you must take his consent for granted, as it is impossible for us or you to receive an answer before the time specified: nor for many reasons can either he or I attend in person: I am sorry that all this has so happened. Call your child Alfred if you will: he was born in the same

house, perhaps the same chamber, as myself, and I trust he is destined to a far happier life than mine has been, poor little fellow ! Give him a kiss for his god-father, and one to Cathy for her violets which I received and cherished : or if one do not seem enough, give them by the dozen. I am glad that you like the miniature. The papers spoke the truth about Umberslade but they fibbed when they said that I was about to publish. What would be the use of that in a general election ? I am writing in great hurry to save the Northern post, so I bid you good-bye,

A. TENNYSON.

2 JAMES' ST., BUCKINGHAM GATE.

Wednesday, May 17th.

MY DEAR MRS. BURTON,

I have sent a silver cup for my little godson. I had intended to have sent it many a long month ago, but somehow or other I let the days slip on without doing so ; for this I beg his pardon, which he must grant me as soon as he can babble. I trust that you will receive the cup at the same time with this letter. I hope that you are well and happy during this fine weather which makes me wish myself far away out of smoky London. Best love to my dear little violet-girl, and believe me always, dear Mrs. Burton,

Yours truly, A. TENNYSON.

Letters to Mrs. Howitt

[1846.]

MY DEAR MRS. HOWITT,

The day you mention was at least as pleasant to myself as to you ; one, indeed, not easily to be forgotten. Clapton is henceforth to be remembered with higher and other than cockney associations, it is no longer the London suburb but the home of Mary Howitt. As for the morning dresses, did I notice them? if I did, what matter? they were a compliment to myself.

Your book from Longman has not yet arrived ; but when it does, since (however you may please to depreciate beforehand) it must have something of you about it, I will give it a hearty welcome and my best attention.

I got your letter yesterday, and I have had so much to do in the interim that I have merely glanced over the extracts. They seem to me to be very clever and full of a noble 19th-centuryism (if you will admit such a word), but whether not too fantastic, if considered as an explanation of the Mosaic text, may I think admit of doubt. Meanwhile I hail all such attempts as heralding a grander and more liberal state of opinion, and consequently sweeter and nobler modes of living. There was no more *sea*, says St. John in Revelation. I wonder your friend did not quote that : perhaps he does in some other part of his book. I remember

reading that when a child, and not being able to reconcile myself to a future when there should be no more sea.

I am going up to Cambridge to-morrow to be present at the commemoration of the founding of Trinity College 300 years ago. There is to be a great dinner in Hall, and as I have got a special invitation from my old Tutor, now the Master, I am going ; the 22nd is the dinner-day. I have just left myself time to get there ; think of me to-morrow night as passing within two or three miles of you on the Eastern C. R., perhaps not so far, and again sweeping back a day or two after on my return yet not able to stop, divers duties calling me home with voices of undeniable authority. I ought not to go at all but old recollections drag me. However sometime betwixt the death of Spring and the birth of Summer I do hope to see you once more.

I partly guess your mysterious request. Mr. Howitt's surprise at the hyacinths is a very pretty household picture. I wish that we Englanders dealt more in such symbols, that we drest our affections up in a little more poetical costume ; real warmth of heart would lose nothing, rather gain by it. As it is, our manners are as cold as the walls of our churches. Good-bye, dear Mrs. Howitt, say everything kind for me to husband and daughter and trust me

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

10 ST. JAMES' SQUARE, CHELTENHAM.

Nov. 19th.

DEAR MRS. HOWITT,

Your kind letter gave me very sincere pleasure, and I shall be most happy to meet Mr. Dempster under your roof when I come to town. I did not hear the Hutchinsons¹ when they were in England and I regret it. I am sure Abby must have sung divinely for every one says she did. I can scarce help fancying that the female voice is more suited by nature to the singing of such poems than any man's, but I am wrong, for you tell me that Mr. Dempster sings quite as exquisitely as Abby. I should have been in town before now but several little matters have occurred to hinder me. Among other things I sent an invitation to the German poet, Freiligrath : he has translated some of my poems and he sent me his book thro' my publisher : the letter to Moxon was dated from Mrs. Leigh's, Clapton Pond ; do you know such a person ? I have got no answer and I am puzzled by his silence. Perhaps he may not be in England, after all, but every time the postman knocks I expect to hear from him and that he is coming. I will send you word of my arrival in town.

A. T.

¹ Three brothers and one sister (Abby) who were noted singers. They came from New Hampshire, and were vigorous advocates of the Emancipation of the Slaves. Most of their songs were on this subject.

*Letters to Edward Moxon**(After the tour in Switzerland)*

1846.

MY DEAR MOXON,

I got your parcel and bluebell this morning and a letter from a man who seems deserving and in difficulties ; he has asked me to lend him four pounds, which I have promised to *give* him, and referred him to you. So let him have that sum if he calls with my letter : his name is R. C. W.

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.¹*Second visit to Dr. Gully's water-cure*

UMBERSLADE HALL, BIRMINGHAM, 1847.

Tuesday afternoon.

MY DEAR MOXON,

I wish you would make up your mind to come down on Saturday and see me here. You could come down by the express as I did in three hours to Birmingham, and any of the cabs at the station would bring you on : here is a Hall in a pleasant park, and you would be all the better for a Sunday's mouthful of fresh air. We can give you a bed here and you should do just as you like. I want to talk with you. I

¹ Whenever any literary man "deserving and in difficulties" applied to him for money, he always endeavoured to help him. To the day of his death he continued this practice.

find it very difficult to correct proofs under the treatment,¹ but you shall have them all back with you on Monday; don't show them to people. I have not at all settled whether I shall publish them now or in the Autumn, yet an Edinburgh paper mentions that I have a poem in the press. Confound the publicities and gabblements of the 19th century! Now, I hope you will come. If you do, bring two copies of my poems with you, two persons in this house want them; if you don't come (but I hope you will) send two. The printers are awful zanies, they print erasures and corrections too, and other sins they commit of the utmost inhumanity. Come! Send a line first.

Yours ever,

A. TENNYSON.

¹ From Umberslade my father writes to Mrs. Russell: "They tell me not to read, not to think; but they might as well tell me not to live. I lack something of the woman's long-enduring patience in these matters. It is a terribly long process, but then what price is too high for health, and health of mind is so involved with health of body. . . . I wish you could find time in the course of the summer to come over and see us. We should be so happy to see you. We expect my mother from Scotland in a few days' time. She comes as far as Birmingham with Cecilia and the Professor [Lushington]. The two latter go on to Park House, Lushington's seat near Maidstone; and Charles goes to bring my mother here. Of *her* kindness and true-heartedness I am sure you never had any doubt, and therefore I need not say anything of the joyful welcome she would give you. She has been much grieved just now with the loss of her cousin, Mr. Wheeldon of Market Street near St. Albans. A purer Christian, a better man, never lived. He was like her, for he had not a touch of gall in his whole nature. Peace be with him."

To Rev. T. H. Rawnsley

PARK HOUSE, MAIDSTONE.

April 16th, 1847.

MY DEAR RAWNSLEY,

Many thanks for your very kind letter, which was grateful to me as showing that I am not forgotten amongst you ; not that I wanted any proof of that, but still it is pleasant to have assurance doubly sure. You would have been answered before had I not been away from home, lying sick of more than one ailment at a friend's chamber in the Temple, from whence the other day I came on here partly for change of air and partly because I had promised to pay a farewell visit to my brother-in-law's brother, Harry Lushington. He is going out to Malta as secretary to the Maltese government, a post of (I believe) about £1500 a year and one which he is quite clever enough to occupy with credit to himself ; but being a man of feeble stamina he is afraid of the climate and altogether down in the mouth about it, so I came to see the last of him before he went, and do my best to set him up. I am much grieved to hear of your rheumatism. I fear this bitter April is very unfavourable and the east wind which comes sweeping from the sea over your marshes to Halton. H. L. goes some time next week, and till then I must be here, so that I fear that what

with this and my illness a journey into Lincolnshire so as to catch all your "clan" in full conclave is quite impossible. Well, I can't help it, I love my old friends as much as ever; recent friendships may be broken thro' but old ones early-made are a part of one's blood and bones. I say my old friendships are as dear as ever, but that you must accept this protestation in lieu of my personal presence and not be hard of faith but believing.

Give my kindest love to each and all of the "old familiar faces," and

Believe me always yours truly,

A. TENNYSON.

To Mrs. Russell

10 ST. JAMES' SQUARE, CHELTENHAM.

Saturday evening. [Undated.]

MY DEAREST AUNT,

I have received your welcome note and cheque and had hoped to have a better account of your eyes. Those "animals"¹ you mention are very distressing and mine increase weekly: in fact I almost look forward with certainty to being blind some of these days. I have however no sort of inflammation to complain of, it is all failing nerve. I have no great opinion of the salubrity of Leamington, and as for this place it is often as muggy and

¹ *Muscae volitantes.*

turbid as London itself. "Much company" and after-dinner "talk of roads," etc. are not much in your favour, but why do all English country gentlemen talk of dogs, horses, roads, crops etc. ? It is better after all than affecting Art and Feeling : they would make a poor hand of that, though *you* tried to help them out. I wish they would be a little kinder to the poor. I would honour them then and they might talk what they would. But I am rambling and moreover getting personal on the squires, which perhaps I have no business to do, for, as Hamlet says, "use every man after his deserts and who shall scape whipping ?" With respect to the non-publication of those poems¹ which you mention, it is partly occasioned by the considerations you speak of, and partly by my sense of their present imperfectness ; perhaps they will not see the light till I have ceased to be. I cannot tell but I have no wish to send them out yet. Emily wished us to remember her kindly to you when she was here. She has been visiting the Lushingtons in Kent, and is now with the Hallams at Clifton. I wonder whether you can read this scrawl, my pen is an old steel one in a state of hopeless splittance and divarication. You must forgive me for not answering you before.² I have no excuse to offer and I fling myself on

¹ Probably "In Memoriam."

² He said he could not devote himself to his work and write letters also, so he gave up writing to friends and relations.

your mercy. Do you know, I don't write even a note once in three months. I never can get myself set down to write, and I am in arrears of correspondence with all the world. Good-bye, dearest Aunt. Mother, sisters etc. send lots of love to you and Emma.

Always affectionately yours,
A. TENNYSON.

P.S. Have you read Miss Martineau on Mesmerism in the *Athenæum* (two of them)? I have got them and if you like I will send them to you. They are very *wonderful*.

In 1846 the fourth edition of the Poems was published: and, having been bitterly attacked by Lytton Bulwer because Peel had placed him on the Pension list, my father contributed to *Punch* the only personal satire he ever wrote, "The New Timon and the Poets," February 28th; followed by an "After-thought,"¹ March 7th. About these poems he left a note:

"I never wrote a line against any one but Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer. His lines did not move me to do so. But at the very time he was writing or had written these he was visiting my cousins, the d'Eyncourts, and said to them, 'How much I should like to know your cousin Alfred'; and I, going into a book-club in the town where I was then living, found a news-

¹ Published afterwards under the title of "Literary Squabbles."

paper turned up and folded so that I could not miss, ‘ See how Sir Edward tickles up the poetasters and their patrons.’ The stupid insignificant paper, and the purpose with which it had been set before me, provoked me. I saw afterwards a letter which he wrote to my friend John Forster. Moreover, he stated in a note that I belonged to a very rich family. The younger son, his friend, who had inherited was rich enough, but the elder branch was shut out in the cold, and at that time I had scarce anything. Moreover, I remembered that he had said ‘ If a man be attacked, let him attack.’

Wretched work. Odium literarium.”

My father added : “ I never sent my lines to *Punch*. John Forster did. They were too bitter. I do not think that I should ever have published them.”

A jeu d'esprit

(Written about this period for Miss Bradshaw, sister of Henry Bradshaw, afterwards University Librarian at Cambridge)

Because she bore the iron name
Of him who doomed the king to die,
I deemed her one of stately frame
And looks to awe the standers by,
But found a maiden tender, shy,
With fair blue eyes and winning sweet,
And longed to kiss her hand and lie
A thousand summers at her feet.

Then she 'let some one sing to us. higher move
She minutes pledged with music.' & as maid
Of those behind her smote her harp & sang
~~Tears, like~~ Tears, I know not what they mean.
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart & gather to the eyes
In looking on the happy Anthem fields
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
That brings our friends up from the underworld
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge
So sad, so fresh the days that are no more.

Oh sad & strange as in dark summer-dawn
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square
So sad, so strange the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love
Deep as first love, & wild with all regret
O death in life, the days that are no more

CHAPTER II

"THE PRINCESS"

Maybe wildest dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth.

O lift your natures up :
Embrace our aims : work out your freedom !

There are thousands now
Such women, but convention beats them down ;
It is but bringing up ; no more than that.

"I say God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the world."
"Parson," said I, "you pitch the pipe too low."

WHAT some one called the "herald-melody" of the higher education of women, "The Princess," mostly written in Lincoln's Inn Fields, was published in 1847, and at this time "The Golden Year" was added to the *Poems*. The subject of "The Princess," my father believed, was original,

and certainly the story is full of original incident, humour and fancy.¹

It may have suggested itself when the project of a Women's College was in the air,² or it may have arisen in its mock-heroic form from a Cambridge joke, such as he commemorated in these lines, which I found in one of his old MS. books :

The Doctor's Daughter. (Unpublished)

Sweet Kitty Sandilands,
The daughter of the doctor,
We drest her in the Proctor's bands,
And past her for the Proctor.

All the men ran from her
That would have hasten'd to her,
All the men ran from her
That would have come to woo her.

Up the street we took her
As far as to the Castle,
Jauntily sat the Proctor's cap
And from it hung the tassel.

As for the various characters in the poem, they give all possible views of Woman's higher

¹ Sir William Rowan Hamilton, the great mathematician, said :
“It deeply presses on my reflection how much wiser a book is
Tennyson's *Princess* than my *Quaternions*.”

² He talked over the plan of the poem with my mother in 1839.

education ; and as for the heroine herself, the Princess Ida, the poet who created her considered her as one of the noblest among his women. The stronger the man or woman, the more of the lion or lioness untamed, the greater the man or woman tamed. In the end we see this lioness-like woman subduing the elements of her humanity to that which is highest within her, and recognizing the relation in which she stands towards the order of the world and toward God—

A greater than all knowledge beat her down.

His friends report my father to have said, that the two great social questions impending in England were “the housing and education of the poor man before making him our master, and the higher education of women” ; and that the sooner woman finds out, before the great educational movement begins, that “woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse,” the better it will be for the progress of the world.¹

¹ Dawson, the Canadian editor of “The Princess,” writes : “At the time of the publication of ‘The Princess’ the surface-thought of England was intent solely upon Irish famines, corn-laws and free-trade. It was only after many years that it became conscious of anything being wrong in the position of women. . . . No doubt such ideas were at the time ‘in the air’ in England, but the dominant, practical Philistinism scoffed at them as ‘ideas’ banished to America, that refuge for exploded European absurdities.”

[I believe the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary (Wollstonecraft) Godwin (1792) first turned the attention of the people of England to the “wrongs of women.”]

There have not been wanting those who have deemed the varied characters and imagery of the poem wasted on something of a fairy tale without the fairies.¹ But, in this instance as in others involving the supreme meaning and guidance of life, a parable is perhaps the teacher that can most surely enter in at all doors.

It was no mere dramatic sentiment, but one of my father's strongest convictions of the true relation between man and woman, which impelled him to write :

Let this proud watchword rest
Of equal ; seeing either sex alone
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,
Life.

And if woman in her appointed place “stays all the fair young planet in her hands,” she may be well content. She has space enough to

Burgeon out of all
Within her—let her make herself her own
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.

¹ The following paragraphs are based on what my father said about the poem.

She must train herself to do the large work that lies before her, even though she may not be destined to be wife or mother, cultivating her understanding not her memory only, her imagination in its highest phases, her inborn spirituality and her sympathy with all that is pure, noble and beautiful, rather than mere social accomplishments ; then and then only will she further the progress of humanity, then and then only men will continue to hold her in reverence.

On the other hand one of the poet's main tests of manhood is "the chivalrous reverence" for womanhood.

To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they win her ; for indeed I know
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought and amiable words,
And courtliness and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

He would say, "I would pluck my hand from a man even if he were my greatest hero, or dearest friend, if he wronged a woman or told her a lie."

After 1847 "The Princess" underwent considerable alterations. The second edition was published in 1848 with a few amendments, and dedicated to Henry Lushington, but in 1850 a

third edition appeared with omissions and many additions, and notably six songs were introduced, which help to express more clearly the meaning of “the medley.”

These songs

The women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind.

In 1851 the “weird seizures” of the Prince were inserted. His too emotional temperament was intended from an artistic point of view to emphasize his comparative want of power. “Moreover,” my father writes, “the words ‘dream-shadow,’ ‘were and were not’ doubtless refer to the anachronisms and improbabilities of the story : compare the prologue,

Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream,
and v. 466,

And like a flash the weird affection came,

* * * * *

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream.”

“It may be remarked that there is scarcely anything in the story which is not prophetically glanced at in the prologue.” My father added : “It is true that some of the blank verse in this

poem is among the best I ever wrote"—such passages as :

Not peace she look'd—the Head : but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms
and call'd

Across the tumult and the tumult fell ;

and as this description of a storm seen from
Snowdon :

As one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendour from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake, and tarn by tarn,
Expunge the world ;

and as these lines from the last canto :

Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world ;
Approach and fear not ; breathe upon my brows ;
In that fine air I tremble, all the past
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
Is morn to more, and all the rich to-come
Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels

Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me,
I waste my heart in signs : let be. My bride,
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows.

For *simple* rhythm and vowel music he considered his “Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height,” written in Switzerland (chiefly at Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald), and descriptive of the waste Alpine heights and gorges, and of the sweet, rich valleys below, as amongst his “*most successful work*.” But by this phrase he meant no more than that he felt he had done his best : there was no tinge of vanity in it. To put his own poetry in favourable comparison with that of others was never in his mind.

He said that “The passion of the past, the abiding in the transient, was expressed in ‘Tears, idle Tears,’ which was written in the yellowing autumn-tide at Tintern Abbey, full for me of its bygone memories. Few know that it is a blank verse lyric.” He thought that my uncle Charles’ sonnet of “Time and Twilight” had the same sort of mystic, *dämonisch* feeling.

The only song in “The Princess” approved by FitzGerald was “Blow, Bugle, Blow,” commemorating the echoes at Killarney.¹

¹ When my father was last there a boatman said to him, “So you’re the gentleman that brought the money to the place?”

"That is one of Fitz's crotchets," FitzGerald said to me in 1876, "and I am considered a great heretic, because like Carlyle I gave up all hopes of him after 'The Princess.'" He wrote once, and repeated for me in his MS. notes, that none of the songs had "the old champagne flavour," adding, "Alfred is the same magnanimous, kindly delightful fellow as ever, uttering by far the finest prose-sayings of any one." Nothing either by Thackeray or by my father met FitzGerald's approbation unless he had first seen it in manuscript.

The following notes on "The Princess" were left by my father :

In the Prologue the "Tale from mouth to mouth" was a game which I have more than once played when I was at Trinity College, Cambridge, with my brother undergraduates. Of course, if he "that inherited the tale" had not attended very carefully to his predecessors, there were contradictions ; and if the story were historical, occasional anachronisms. In defence of what some have called the too poetical passages, it should be recollected that the poet of the party was requested to "dress the tale up poetically," and he was full of the "gallant and heroic chronicle." Some of my remarks on passages in the "Princess" have been published by Dawson of Canada, who copied them from a letter which I wrote to him criticizing his study

of the Princess.”¹ The child is the link thro’ the parts as shown in the songs which are the best interpreters of the poem.² Before the first edition came out, I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs between the separate divisions of the poem ; again I thought that the poem would explain itself, but the public did not see the drift. The first song I wrote was named “The Losing of the Child.” The child is sitting on the bank of the river and playing with flowers ; a flood comes down ; a dam has been broken thro’—the child is borne down by the flood ; the whole village distracted ; after a time the flood has subsided ; the child is thrown safe and sound again upon the bank ; and there is a chorus of jubilant women.

¹ The letter is printed on pp. 32-37 of this volume.

² “At the end of the first canto, fresh from the description of the female college, with its professoresses, and hostleresses, . . . we turn the page, and—

As through the land at eve we went.

* * * * *

O there above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

Between the next two cantos intervenes the well-known cradle song, perhaps the best of all ; and at the next interval is the equally well-known bugle-song, the idea of which is that of twin-labour and twin-fame in a pair of lovers. In the next the memory of wife and child inspires the soldier on the field ; in the next the sight of the fallen hero’s child opens the sluices of his widow’s tears ; and in the last, . . . the poet has succeeded, in the new edition, in superadding a new form of emotion to a canto in which he seemed to have exhausted every resource of pathos which his subject allowed.”—Charles Kingsley, in *Fraser’s Magazine*, September, 1850.

(Unpublished fragment)

The child was sitting on the bank
 Upon a stormy day,
 He loved the river's roaring sound ;
 The river rose and burst his bound,
 Flooded fifty leagues around,
 Took the child from off the ground,
 And bore the child away.
 O the child so meek and wise,
 Who made *us* wise and mild !

* * * * *

Two versions of "Sweet and Low" were made, and were sent to my mother to choose which should be published. She chose the published one in preference to that which follows, because it seemed to her more song-like.

(Unpublished version)

Bright is the moon on the deep,
 Bright are the cliffs in her beam,
 Sleep, my little one, sleep !
 Look he smiles, and opens his hands,
 He sees his father in distant lands,
 And kisses him there in a dream,
 Sleep, sleep.

Father is over the deep,
 Father will come to thee soon,
 Sleep, my pretty one, sleep !

Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the West,
Under the silver moon,
Sleep, sleep !

The notices of “The Princess” that I know interested my father were those by Aubrey de Vere,¹ Charles Kingsley, Robertson (the Brighton preacher), and Dawson of Montreal. To the last² he wrote a letter (Nov. 21st, 1882) which may be quoted in full :

I thank you for your able and thoughtful essay on “The Princess.” You have seen amongst other things that if women ever were to play such freaks, the burlesque and the tragic might go hand in hand. * * * Your explanatory notes are very much to the purpose, and I do not object to your finding parallelisms. They must always occur. A man (a Chinese scholar)

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, No. clxxxii. October, 1849.

² In Dawson’s *Study of the Princess* I find that I have written, after a talk with my father *à propos* possibly of the battle at the end of the poem :—“A. T. observed : ‘Macpherson’s ‘Ossian’ is poor in most parts, but this is a grand image—After saying that the beam of battle was bright before the spectral warrior, he goes on somehow like this : ‘But behind thee was the Shadow of Death, like the darkened half of the moon behind its other half in growing light.’” A. T. talked of ‘the beautiful picture that the girl graduates would have made ; the long hall glittering like a bed of flowers with daffodil and lilac.’ Then he touched on the old religions and the ‘old god of war’ ; ‘the Norse mythology,’ he said, ‘is finer than the Greek with its human gods, though the Greek has more beauty. The Norsemen thought that there was something better in the way of religion that would dawn upon the earth after the Ragnarok or twilight of the gods.’”

some time ago wrote to me saying that in an unknown, untranslated Chinese poem there were two whole lines¹ of mine almost word for word. Why not? Are not human eyes all over the world looking at the same objects, and must there not consequently be coincidences of thought and impressions and expressions? It is scarcely possible for any one to say or write anything in this late time of the world to which, in the rest of the literature of the world, a parallel could not somewhere be found. But when you say that this passage or that was suggested by Wordsworth or Shelley or another, I demur; and more, I wholly disagree. There was a period in my life when, as an artist, Turner for instance, takes rough sketches of landskip, etc. in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling, in four or five words or more, whatever might strike me as picturesque in Nature. I never put these down, and many and many a line has gone away on the north wind, but some remain: *e.g.*

A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight.

Suggestion.

The sea one night at Torquay, when Torquay was the most lovely sea-village in England, tho'

¹ The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

"The Voice and the Peak."

now a smoky town. The sky was covered with thin vapour, and the moon behind it.

A great black cloud
Drags inward from the deep.

Suggestion.

A coming storm seen from the top of Snowdon.

In the “Idylls of the King,”

With all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies.

Suggestion.

A storm which came upon us in the middle of the North Sea.

As the water-lily starts and slides.

Suggestion.

Water-lilies in my own pond, seen on a gusty day with my own eyes. They did start and slide in the sudden puffs of wind till caught and stayed by the tether of their own stalks, quite as true as Wordsworth’s simile and more in detail.

A wild wind shook,—
Follow, follow, thou shalt win.

Suggestion.

I was walking in the New Forest. A wind did arise and

Shake the songs, the whispers and the shrieks
Of the wild wood together.

The wind I believe was a west wind, but because I wished the Prince to go south, I turned the wind to the south, and naturally the wind said "follow." I believe the resemblance which you note is just a chance one. Shelley's lines are not familiar to me tho' of course, if they occur in the *Prometheus*, I must have read them. I could multiply instances, but I will not bore you, and far indeed am I from asserting that books as well as Nature are not, and ought not to be, suggestive to the poet. I am sure that I myself, and many others, find a peculiar charm in those passages of such great masters as Virgil or Milton where they adopt the creation of a bygone poet, and re-clothe it, more or less, according to their own fancy. But there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, book-worms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that *he*, too, has no imagination, but is for ever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate. They will not allow one to say 'Ring the bell' without finding that we have taken it from Sir P. Sidney, or even to use such a simple expression as the ocean "roars," without finding out the precise verse in Homer or Horace from which we have plagiarised it (fact!).

I have known an old fish-wife, who had lost two sons at sea, clench her fist at the advancing

tide on a stormy day, and cry out, “Ay ! roar, do ! how I hates to see thee show thy white teeth.” Now if I had adopted her exclamation and put it into the mouth of some old woman in one of my poems, I daresay the critics would have thought it original enough, but would most likely have advised me to go to Nature for my old women and not to my own imagination ;¹ and indeed it is a strong figure.

Here is another anecdote about suggestion. When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among these mountains before a waterfall² that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words :

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.

When I printed this, a critic informed me that “lawn” was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and graciously added, “Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to Nature herself for his suggestions.” And I *had* gone to Nature herself.

I think it is a moot point whether, if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage, I should have ventured to publish the line.

¹ He used to compare with this the Norfolk saying which we heard when we were staying with the Rev. C. T. Digby at Warham : “The sea’s a-moanin’ ; she’s lost the wind.”

² In the Cirque de Gavarnie.

I find that I have written, quite contrary to my custom, a letter, when I had merely intended to thank you for your interesting commentary.

Thanking you again for it, I beg you to believe me

Very faithfully yours,
A. TENNYSON.

Letters after the publication of "The Princess"

To Edward FitzGerald

1847.

MY DEAR FITZ,

Ain't I a beast for not answering you before? not that I am going to write now, only to tell you that I have seen Carlyle more than once, and that I have been sojourning at 42 Ebury Street for some twenty days or so, and that I am going to bolt as soon as ever I can, and that I would go to Italy if I could get anybody to go with me which I can't, and so I suppose I shan't go, which makes me hate myself and all the world; for the rest I have been be-dined usque ad nauseam. A pint of pale ale and a chop are things yearned after, not achievable except by way of lunch. However, this night I have sent an excuse to Mrs. Procter and here I am alone, and wish you were with me. How are you getting on? Don't grow quite into glebe before I see you again.

My book is out and I hate it, and so no doubt will you.

Never mind, you will like me none the worse, and now good-night. I am knocked up and going to bed.

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.

To Aubrey de Vere

1847.

MY DEAR AUBREY,

I have ordered Moxon to send you the new edition¹ of “The Princess.” You will find that I have in some measure adopted your suggestions, not entirely. Many thanks for your critique in the *Edinburgh*. There were only one or two little things in it which I did not like; for instance that about the “dying and the dead” which is quite wide of the mark,² and you will see that I have inserted a line to guard against such an interpretation in future; however I have every reason to be grateful to you, both for the ability of the article and for the favourable view you take of me in general; too favourable surely. I dare not believe such good things of myself. I have seen no papers for an age, and do not know how your poor are going on. I fear this bitter weather is very hard upon them.

A. T.

¹ Not published till 1848.

² See p. 67.

To Mrs. Howitt

42 EBURY STREET.

MY DEAR MRS. HOWITT,

I got your beautiful book of Ballads the other day at Moxon's. It contains (as far as I have seen it) much that is sweet and good and reminds me of yourself. I have however been myself so much engaged with proof-sheets for the few days since I received it that I have not had leisure to do it justice by a fair perusal. Accept in return a book¹ of mine which I have sent to Longmans' for you. I don't believe you will like it—not at least till after three readings, if you will honour it so far. Best remembrances to husband and daughter, not forgetting the younglings and

Believe me always yours,
A. TENNYSON.

For the sisters Brontë my father had the highest admiration. He received the following letter from Currer Bell (Charlotte Brontë) :

June 16th, 1847.

SIR,

My relatives, Ellis and Acton Bell, and myself, heedless of the repeated warnings of various respectable publishers, have committed the rash act of printing a volume of poems.

¹ "The Princess."

The consequences predicted have of course overtaken us ; our book is found to be a drug ; no man needs it nor heeds.

In the space of a year the publisher has disposed but of two copies ; and by what painful efforts he succeeded in getting rid of these two, himself only knows.

Before transferring the edition to the trunkmakers, we have decided on distributing as presents a few copies of what we cannot sell. We beg to offer you one in acknowledgement of the pleasure and profit we have often and long derived from your works.

I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,
CURRER BELL.

CHAPTER III

CHELTENHAM, LONDON, CORNWALL,
SCOTLAND AND IRELAND, 1846-1850

THE headquarters of the Tennysons were now at Cheltenham, Bellevue House in St. James' Square. I am indebted to Dr. Ker, brother of Judge Alan Ker, who married Miss Mary Tennyson, for some details of my father's life at this time.

From 1846 to 1850 he was often with his mother and family, but cannot be said to have moved in the society of the place: still he made some new acquaintances. The names I can recall are those of Dobson,¹ Principal of Cheltenham College; Boyd, afterwards Dean of Exeter; Foxton, author of *Popular Christianity*; Sydney Dobell, the poet; Dr. Acworth; Rashdall, Vicar of Malvern; Reece; and the well-known and "much beloved" Frederick Robertson, then Boyd's curate, afterwards incumbent of Trinity Chapel, Brighton.

¹ Dobson was third classic in the same year that Edmund Lushington was senior classic and Thompson fourth.

There was a little room at the top of the house in St. James' Square, not kept in very orderly fashion, for books and papers were to be seen quite as much on the floor and the chairs as upon the table. Here my father, pipe in mouth, discoursed to his friends more unconstrainedly than anywhere else on men and things and what death means. When the talk was on religious questions, which was not often, he spoke confidently of a future existence. Of Christianity he said, "it is rugging at my heart."¹

My father would say: "The first time I met Robertson I felt that he expected something notable from me because I knew that he admired my poems, that he wished to pluck the heart from my mystery; so for the life of me from pure nervousness I could talk of nothing but beer."

Dr. Ker says:

Sydney Dobell did not see much of your father in Cheltenham; but in Malvern, some years after your family left this place, Dobell, as he afterwards told me, saw a good deal of him. Dobell, as you know, was not a popular poet, and the number of his readers does not increase as the years go on, but that he was no commonplace poet your father heartily allowed. Frederick Foxton could only be brought to speak on one subject, Carlyle, whose companion and caretaker he had been during a journey on the Continent. Rashdall

¹ Dr. Ker, MS. Notes.

and Dr. Acworth were men of cultivation and high social qualities whom your father met occasionally and much liked.

One acquaintance would keep on assuring my father that it was the greatest honour of his life to have met him. My father's answer to such praise was, "Don't talk d—d nonsense."

His chief companion, when in Cheltenham, for the best part of two years, was Dr. Ker's brother Alan. Both were great walkers, and few near or distant places in this beautiful neighbourhood were left unvisited by them.

A year or two before, my father had lived some weeks in a Hydropathic Establishment at the very primitive village of Prestbury, and the village boys were in the habit of following him and the other inmates whenever they showed themselves on the roads and shouting, "Shiver and shake." This made him very nervous at the time, and the thought even of passing through Prestbury revived the feeling.

Dr. Ker writes :

Two wishes I used to hear him express ; one was to see the West Indies, the other to see the earth from a balloon.

Few things delighted me more than to see the mother and son together. You cannot remember your grandmother, I think. She was a perfect picture, a beautiful specimen of the English gentlewoman, loving and loveable, "no angel but a dearer being," and so sensitive that touch her feelings ever so lightly and the

tears rushed to her eyes. Then it was we used to hear your father say, "Dam your eyes, mother, dam your eyes!" and then she smiled and applied the white pocket-handkerchief and shook her head at her son. He often jested with her about Dr. Cumming and his "bottles," the bottles being the seven vials of St. John's Revelation! You have heard, I dare say, that your grandmother confined her reading at that time to two books, the *Bible* and Dr. Cumming's work on *Prophecy*. He used to jest with his mother about her monkey, a clever little black thing that was generally seen in the garden perched on the top of a pole. Your father naturally christened it St. Simeon Stylites. I once ventured to ask him whether his mother had not sat for the picture of the Prince's mother in "The Princess," and he allowed that no one else had.

Happy he
 With such a mother! faith in womankind
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
 He shall not blind his soul with clay.

Your father's estimate of Wordsworth's poetry was a very high one as you must know, and I dare say you know that Wordsworth's opinion of your father was also very high. On one of the occasions of their meeting Wordsworth said to him: "Mr. Tennyson, I have been endeavouring all my life to write a pastoral like your 'Dora' and have not succeeded." That was great praise from one who honestly weighed his words and was by no means lavish of his praise.

From Cheltenham my father made expeditions to London to see his old friends. One day

Savile Morton writes that he has called on Alfred, and found Thackeray there, and "a stack of shag tobacco with Homer and Miss Barrett on the table." "Both Thackeray and Alfred," he adds, "praise Miss Barrett." My father grew to know Thackeray well and would call him a "loveable man." A story which he told illustrates the character of both the friends. They had been dining together and my father said, "I love Catullus for his perfection in form and for his tenderness, he is tenderest of Roman poets," and quoted the lines about Quintilia's death ending with

"Quo desiderio veteres renovamus amores
Atque olim amissas flemus amicitias"—

lines which he would translate by four lines from one of Shakespeare's Sonnets,

"Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh Love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight,"

and the stanza from the Junia et Mallii Epithalamium,

"Torquatus, volo, parvulus
Matris e gremio suæ
Porrigens teneras manus
Dulce rideat ad patrem,
Semihiente labello."

Thackeray answered, "I do not rate him highly, I could do better myself." Next morning my father received this apology :

MY DEAR ALFRED,

I woke at 2 o'clock, and in a sort of terror at a certain speech I had made about Catullus. When I have dined, sometimes I believe myself to be equal to the greatest painters and poets. That delusion goes off; and then I know what a small fiddle mine is and what small tunes I play upon it. It was very generous of you to give me an opportunity of recalling a silly speech : but at the time I thought I was making a perfectly simple and satisfactory observation. Thus far I must *unbus'm* myself: though why should I be so uneasy at having made a conceited speech? It is conceited not to wish to seem conceited. With which I conclude,

Yours, W. M. T.

"It was impossible," said my father, "to have written in a more generous spirit. No one but a noble-hearted man could have written such a letter."

During the "forties" he was in the habit of walking with Carlyle at night, and Carlyle would rail against the "governments of Jackasserie which cared more for commerce than for the greatness of our empire"; or would rave against the stuccoed houses in London as "acrid putrescence," or against the suburbs as a "black jumble of black cottages where there used to be pleasant fields"; and they would both agree

that it was growing into "a strange chaos of odds and ends, this London." They were not in the least afraid of one another although many were afraid of them, and they had long and free discussions on every conceivable subject, and once only almost quarrelled, when Carlyle asserted that my father talked of poetry as "high art," which he flatly contradicted, "I never in my whole life spoke of 'high art.'"

They had—both of them—lost MSS. of their works; Carlyle his *French Revolution*, my father *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*. When my father asked Carlyle how he felt after the disappearance of his MS., he answered, "Well, I just felt like a man swimming without water."

My uncle Frederick writes :

I am sure I could not perform such a feat as I know Alfred to have done, any more than raise the dead. The earliest MS. of the *Poems, chiefly Lyrical* he lost out of his great-coat pocket one night while returning from a neighbouring market town. This was enough to reduce an ordinary man to despair, but the invisible ink was made to reappear, all the thoughts and fancies in their orderly series and with their entire drapery of words arose and lived again. I wonder what under such circumstances would become of the "mob of gentlemen who write with ease." Of course it would not much matter as they could easily indite something new.

My father's poems were generally based on some single phrase like "Some one had blundered":

and were rolled about, so to speak, in his head, before he wrote them down : and hence they did not easily slip from his memory.

In these London days among his friends were the Kembles, Coventry Patmore, Frederick Pollock, Alfred Wigan, and Macready ; and he enjoyed "turning in" at the theatres. Macready he thought not good in "Hamlet" but fine in "Macbeth" : yet said that his "Out, out, brief candle !" was wrong, "not vexed and harassed as it ought to be, but spoken with lowered voice, and a pathos which, I am sure, Shakespeare never intended."

One evening, at Bath House, Milnes wished to introduce my father to the Duke of Wellington. "No," my father said, "why should the great Duke be bothered by a poor poet like me?" He only once saw the Duke, when he was riding out of the Horse Guards at Whitehall : and took off his hat. The Duke instantly made his usual military salute, commemorated in the "Ode on the death of the Duke of Wellington" in the well-known lines :

No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.

Rogers continued to be intimate with my father, and would ask him privately his opinion on literary matters.¹ At one of the famous break-

¹ My father asked him why he did not write a sonnet. "I never could dance in fetters," he answered. My father himself preferred the Shakespearian form of sonnet to the Italian, as being less constrained.

fasts, wishing to do my father honour before the company, and expecting praise, Rogers enquired whether he approved of a particular poem by himself. My father told him frankly that a certain emendation would be an improvement. "It shall be attended to," answered Rogers, but very stiffly. Then, because my father went to the Water-Cure, Rogers had an erroneous idea that he "suffered from many infirmities." When I showed my father this statement in a published letter, he wrote down: "No truer comment could be made on this than my favourite adage, 'Every man imputes himself.' My good old friend had many infirmities. What mine were I know not unless short-sight and occasional hypochondria be infirmities. I used, from having early read in my father's library a great number of medical books, to fancy at times that I had all the diseases in the world, like a medical student. I dare say old Rogers meant it all for the best. Peace be with him! often bitter, but very kindly at heart. We have often talked of death together till I have seen the tears roll down his cheeks."

About this time there was a dinner given at Hampstead by a Society of Authors, Sergeant Talfourd in the chair. My father accepted an invitation to the dinner on condition that he should not be asked to make a speech. Many speeches were made, each author praising every other author. My father seems to have said to his neighbour,

"I wonder which of us will last 500 years?" Upon which Talfourd jumped up and burst forth into "a speech about Tennyson," affirming that he was "sure to live." Then Douglas Jerrold seized my father's hand and said, "I haven't the smallest doubt that you will outlast us all, and that you are the one who will live." The subject of these enthusiastic words disclaimed his sureness of lasting, and told his friends that while thanking them all he felt his inability to make a speech and so on. Talfourd shouted out, "Why you are making a speech." "Yes," answered my father, "but not upon my legs."

Letters, 1846-7

To F. Freiligrath

10 ST. JAMES' SQUARE, CHELTENHAM.

Nov. 5th [1846].

MY DEAR SIR,

I had long ago heard of you : I knew that you were a celebrated German Poet and lover of Liberty : therefore was my satisfaction great to receive (as I did this morning) a copy of your works with your own friendly autograph. I need not say how much I feel the honour you have done me in translating some of my poems into your own noble and powerful language. Would that my acquaintance were

more perfect with German,¹ then would my tribute of approbation be of more value and less incur the charge of presumption. I have not yet had time and leisure sufficient to read your translations from myself carefully; but from what I have seen and if I may be permitted to judge, I should say that they are not dry bones, but seem full of a living warmth, in fact a *Poet's* translation of Poetry. I could wish however that you had taken the 2nd edition of "Mariana in the South": the old poem was so imperfect as to be wholly unworthy your notice.

Accept my friendship and my regrets that I am not at present able to come up to town and shake you by the hand. How long do you stop in England? Is there any hope that you could be prevailed upon to come to Cheltenham? I should be most happy to see you. Write to me and tell me, and

Believe me, my dear Sir, ever yours,

A. TENNYSON.²

To Mrs. Howitt

[DR. GULLY'S.]

May 22nd [1847?].

MY DEAR MRS. HOWITT,

I got your letter three or four days ago and if I did not answer immediately you must

¹ He could read German with ease at this time.

² Mrs. Freiligrath-Kroecker writes to me that the poets met at the Howitts' toward the end of November 1846, and greatly enjoyed their talk together.

lay it to the account of the water-cure which I am undergoing and which renders letter-writing or anything, except washing and walking, more difficult than those who have not past thro' the same ordeal would easily believe.

At this moment my own family do not know where I am : I have not written home, nor shall write I dare say for some time ; to be sure I am not at any time much in the habit of writing home, and so my people know my ways and forgive them ; but to you I feared to seem unkind and forgetful of the pleasant day I spent under your roof if I kept silence ; so I write to tell you that my visit to Clapton though necessarily postponed will really if I live and thrive sometime take place ; "sunshine" and "flowers" will go on for a long time yet, and before they are all gone I hope to see you and to find you wholly recovered from the effects of that sad and anxious winter you speak of ; to me it is not permitted to be either sad or anxious if I am to get better. I must, like Prince Hal, "doff the world aside and let it pass," so says my doctor tho' he does not quote Shakespeare for it.

Good-bye and give my best remembrances to all yours whom I know, and

Believe me, my dear Mrs. Howitt,

Yours very truly, A. TENNYSON.

1848-49

In February the Tennysons received a letter from Emily in Paris. The Revolution against Louis Philippe had begun. She had been looking out of her window, and was shot at by one of the Revolutionists, the bullet missing her and going through the ceiling. The account continues, written but not signed by her :

31 RUE TRONCHET.
Feb. 25th, 1848.

* * * * *

It would be impossible to attempt any description of the horrors of yesterday. However, the public events are better recorded, and will have reached you by means of the paper. But I will at once satisfy your anxiety as to the safety of myself and all our friends. Instead of retiring to the Convent as I had intended on Wednesday, I could not make up my mind to leave my friends at a moment of such imminent danger, and the only moment past in which I could have crossed the Bridges. I have remained the last two nights with Madame Marthion, sleeping in her room, unable to procure any clothes but those I brought on my back from the Convent on Tuesday. Yesterday past like a fearful dream. In the morning it was hoped the resignation of Guizot would satisfy the people, but their triumph only made them the more exorbitant, and while the General who had gone to his post at the Tuileries was breakfasting at 11 o'clock, the Deputation came to the King, and everything was immediately in disorder. The King, after recommending to the

National Guard the safety of the citizens, started for St. Cloud in a carriage, with all his family, except the Duchess of Orleans and her children. The General was apprised of Sophie's arrival at the Tuileries, and went downstairs to see her, and on returning to his post by the Duchess of Orleans as quickly as he could, was met by her. "Mon cher Général, suivez-moi" was all she was able to say to him in passing. The poor man was unable to obey, and his feelings can be better understood than described, as he saw her crossing the Tuileries Gardens on foot, escorted by a few friends amidst this infuriated mob to the Chamber of Deputies. There she was at first well received, but some of the mob penetrated and surrounded her, and one man applied a gun to her cheek. This however was happily turned off by a Deputy, and Jules Lasteyre, another of the Opposition Deputies, aided by many of his brother Deputies, defended her and contrived to get her into a fiacre which he drove to the Invalides. She was separated from her children for some time, but at length they joined her in disguise, and she is at this moment not at the Invalides, but in a secret place of safety, of which the General himself is ignorant. After the departure of the King, the Tuileries was thoroughly invaded by the mob, and every article of furniture completely destroyed. The poor General stayed to defend the property of the Duchess as long as he thought he could be of use, and then he with Sophie left the Tuileries, he, almost lifted downstairs by a man whom he had had an opportunity of serving, and his infirmities were respected by the mob, till he got to the Rue du 29 Juillet, towards 2 o'clock; from thence, as soon as he could be removed, to the Rue des Capucines where he is now. Of course his place and position are gone, but you may conceive the

anxiety of our minds to know what had become of him and Sophie during the fearful hours they were in the Tuileries, where it was impossible to attempt any communication. * * * You never saw such a set of ruffians as infest the streets, armed with every weapon with which they could furnish themselves, shouting and singing the "Marseillaise," etc. About half an hour ago a gang went by shouting "Au chemin de fer"; and we fear that the passage out of Paris will be completely cut off. The streets are all barricaded so that no carriage can pass, and though Madame Marthion and Sophie consider the wisest plan would be to leave the town we fear it will scarcely now be possible. * * * The Palais Royal is burnt down. * * * We were obliged to illuminate for safety's sake last night, and such a host of villains have taken advantage of this tumult, that you may imagine our rest was scarcely so to be called. The fear of pillage, and the anxiety lest this infuriated mob might even turn against our only security, the National Guard, at a moment of no existing government (for the provisional government could not yesterday come to any measures), kept our minds awake, while our eyes were closed, though fatigue of mind and body overcame our anxiety in a great measure. The situation of the General's house, next to Guizot's, also keeps us in constant alarm. The noise of firing also all night, in the uncertainty of its being merely rejoicing, or with murderous objects, contributed its share to add to our anxiety. * * *

Provisions are growing very scarce, and the cry for bread is now strong. Yesterday half the mob were drunk.

*My father's journal of his Tour in Cornwall, 1848
(when he thought of again taking up the subject
of Arthur).*

Tuesday, May. Arrived at Bude in dark, askt girl way to sea, she opens the back door. . . . I go out and in a moment go sheer down, upward of six feet, over wall on fanged cobbles.¹ Up again and walked to sea over dark hill.

June 2nd. Took a gig to Rev. R. S. Hawker at Morwenstow, passing Comb valley, fine view over sea, coldest manner of Vicar till I told my name, then all heartiness. Walk on cliff with him, told of shipwreck.

Sunday. Rainy and bad, went and sat in Tintagel ruins, cliff all black and red and yellow, weird looking thing.

5th. Clomb over Isle, disappointed, went thro' the sea-tunnel-cavern over great blocks. Walls lined with shells, pink or puce jellies. Girls playing about the rocks as in a theatre.

¹ "At one place," writes Miss Fox, "where he arrived in the evening, he cried, 'Where is the sea? Show me the sea.' So after the sea he went stumbling in the dark, and fell down and hurt his leg so much that he had to be nursed six weeks by a surgeon there, who introduced some friends to him, and thus he got into a class of society totally new to him; and when he left they gave him a series of introductions, so that instead of going to hotels he was passed on from town to town, and abode with little grocers and shopkeepers along his line of travel. He says that he cannot have better got a true impression of the class, and thinks the Cornish very superior to the generality. They all knew about Tennyson, and had read his poems, and one miner hid behind a wall that he might see him. Thus he became familiarized with the thoughts and feelings of all classes of society."

6th. Slate quarries, one great pillar left standing ; ship under the cliff loading ; dived into a cavern all polished with the waves like dark marble with veins of pink and white. Follow'd up little stream falling thro' the worn slate, smoked a pipe at little inn, dined, walked once more to the old castle darkening in the gloom.

7th. Camelford, Slaughter Bridge, clear brook among alders. Sought for King Arthur's stone, found it at last by a rock under two or three sycamores, walked seaward, came down by churchyard. Song from ship.

8th. Walked seaward. Large crimson clover ; sea purple and green like a peacock's neck. "By bays, the peacock's neck in hue."

14th. Read part of *Ædipus Coloneus*.

19th. Finished reading *Fathom*.¹ Set off for Polperro, ripple-mark, queer old narrow-streeted place, back at 9. Turf fires on the hills ; jewel-fires in the waves from the oar, which Cornish people call "bryming."

July 1st. Museum. After dinner went to Perranzabuloe. Coast looked gray and grand in the fading light. Went into cave, Rembrandt-like light thro' the opening.

6th. Went to Land's End by Logan rock, leaden-backed mews wailing on cliff, one with two young ones. Mist. Great yellow flare just before sunset. Funeral. Land's End and Life's End.

¹ Doubtless Smollett's *Ferdinand Count Fathom*.

8th. The Lizard, rocks in sea, two southern eyes of England.¹ Tamarisk hedge in flower. Round Pentreath beach, large crane's bill near Kynance, down to cove. Glorious grass-green monsters of waves. Into caves of Asparagus Island. Sat watching wave-rainbows.

11th. Down to Lizard Cove. Smoked with workmen. Boat to several places. Saw the further ships under Penzance like beads threading the sunny shore.

12th. Polpur. Bathed, ran in and out of cave. Down to Caerthillian, lovely clear water in cove. Lay over Pentreath beach, thunder of waves to west. Penaluna's *Cornwall*.

13th. Bathed in Polpur Cove. Bewick-like look of trunk, cloak and carpet bag, lying on rock. Sailed, could not land at Kynance. Saw the long green swell heaving on the black cliff, rowed into Pigeonthugo, dismal wailing of mews. To St. Ives.

Mrs. Rundle Charles,² who was then Miss Rundle, allowed me to publish the following account, from her private diary, of my father's visit (during this tour) to her uncle's house near Plymouth.

We were staying at Upland, a country house belonging to an uncle of mine four miles from Plymouth. Whilst there we were walking on the Hoe at Plymouth

¹ Lighthouses.

² Author of *The Schönberg-Cotta Family*; she died in 1896.

one day, when to my delight we were told that my father was to drive Mr. Tennyson from Tavistock to pay us a visit at Upland. The clergyman's wife and other friends came to tea that afternoon, but Mr. Tennyson did not appear. We went out for a ramble in the wood, were caught in a shower and ran home. Mr. Tennyson was there, in the hall, just arrived : my father introduced me to him, and he came into the drawing-room, and said to my mother, "You have a party," which he did not seem to like. My father then called me in to make tea for Mr. Tennyson in the dining-room, and we had a quiet talk ; a powerful, thoughtful face, kind smile, hearty laugh, extremely near-sighted.¹ He spoke of travelling ; Dresden, unsatisfactoriness of picture-gallery seeing ; the first time he was in Paris he "went every day for a fortnight to the Louvre, saw only one picture, 'La Maîtresse de Titien,' the second time looked only at 'Narcissus lying by a stream, Echo in the distance and ferocious little Love.'" Mr. Ruskin set his own thought against the united admiration of centuries, but he spoke of a "splendid chapter on Clouds" in *Modern Painters*.

Then he turned to Geology, Weald of Kent, Delta of a great river flowing from as far as Newfoundland. "Conceive," he said, "what an era of the world that must have been, great lizards, marshes, gigantic ferns!" Fancied, standing by a railway at night, the engine must be like some great Ichthyosaurus. I replied how beautiful Hugh Miller's descriptions of that time are : he thought so too : then spoke of Peach, the Cornish

¹ He talked then with his friends of Sir Charles Napier and of his battle of Meeanee (1843), about which he half thought of making a poem, and said that Westley the optician had told him that Sir Charles Napier and he were the two most short-sighted men in England.

geologist on the Preventive Service, maintaining a wife and seven children on £100 a year, whilst we in one annual dinner, champagne, turtle, etc. spend £25.

He spoke of the Italians as a great people (it was in 1848, the year of revolutions¹) "twice matured." He had read a poem of mine on Italy: said he felt "great interest in the Italian movement as in all great movements for freedom"; that perhaps all looked equally disorderly as they arose; that the German revolutions (of 1848) were miserable plagiarisms. We went into the drawing-room, I played Mendelssohn. Mr. Tennyson came and talked to me about Schiller,— "Schwärmerisch, yet Schwärmerei better than mere kalter Verstand; not dramatic: knew by heart Goethe's Gedichte 'Summer breathings.' Felt the grand intellectual power of *Faust*, but threw it aside in disgust at the first reading!" Then he spoke of Milton's Latinisms, and delicate play with words, and Shakespeare's play upon words. At supper he spoke of Goethe's *Tasso*: he felt with Tasso, did not care for anything else in the play. "Leonora, discreet, prudential young lady, could not of course care for the poor poet—it would not have been the thing, it would not have done: remembered only these lines:

¹ He used to tell with infinite humour the following story, illustrating the love of a row in the hot-blooded South. "Edward Lear, the painter, had been living at a hotel in a small town in Southern Italy, but had gone on a tour leaving his room locked up. On his return he found the place in the uproar of a mushroom revolution, the inhabitants drunk with *chianti* and shouting *libertà* and *la patria* through the streets. 'Where is my *chiave*,' said he to the waiter, 'of my *camera* to get at my *roba*?' 'O,' replied the waiter, not liking to be let down from his dream of a golden age, '*O che chiave! O che camera! O che roba! Non c'è più chiave! Non c'è più camera! Non c'è più roba! Non c'è più niente! Tutto è amore e libertà! O che bella rivoluzione!*'"

‘Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille,
Sich ein Charakter in dem Strom der Welt.’”

Said he had talked of me last night and heard from Dr. Beale, a clergyman of Tavistock, brother-in-law of W. H. Smith, that I knew Greek, and he said he only disliked *pedantry* in women. He said, “Wordsworth was great, but too one-sided to be dramatic.” He spoke of the “snobbery of English society.” It was getting late, so my aunt asked him to stay the night, but he said he had breakfasted alone for a dozen years; then he said to me, “Ich kann nicht hier schlafen.” I said, “Warum?” He said, “Ich kann nicht rauchen.” I translated aloud, he laughed, declared he “had never been played such a trick before, chose the disguise of an obscure northern dialect, and was betrayed to every one”; then he said, “German has great fine words: every language is really untranslatable.” Then the carriage came to take him into Plymouth: he asked to take my poems (manuscript) with him, and said, “Good-night not Good-bye.” Next morning (Tuesday, July 25th) Mr. Tennyson came again: he talked about lower organisms feeling less pain than higher, but would not fish: could not comprehend the feeling of animals with ganglia, little scattered knots of nerves and no brain; spoke of wonderful variety of forms of life, instinct of plants, etc., told the story of “a Brahmin destroying a microscope because it showed him animals killing each other in a drop of water”; “significant, as if we could destroy facts by refusing to see them.” We walked into the garden, sat on chairs at entrance of avenue; then he laughed about some tremendous “duty-woman,” clergyman’s wife, now Low, now High Church, “always equally vehement, little brains, much conscientiousness; husband preached one thing in the

church, she another in the parish." He said it was right to "enjoy leisure," spoke of Miss Martineau's *Eastern Life*, did not like her, said he supposed we were not Unitarians or Pagans, although it was the fashion with literary ladies. Then he spoke of my poems, said he liked some very much, especially some lines on the gentianella: then he kindly made one or two verbal criticisms in one called "The Poet's Daily Bread." "Have you printed?" he said. "Do not publish too early, you cannot retract." I ventured to thank him for his poems, in which we delighted. "I thank you for yours," he said graciously. We went into the kitchen garden, he talked of flowers and cabbages, picked gooseberries, he "used as a boy to lie for hours under a gooseberry bush reading a novel, finishing his gooseberries and novel together"; he liked the kitchen garden, "so wholesome." "I would rather stay with you bright girls than dine with Mr. W.," he said. He sent away his fly, then we went into my cousin Helen's garden, and he told us stories of "an African woman, who asked to *be breakfasted upon* (by white men)," etc. etc. Afterwards we drove him into Plymouth. "You would not think me a shy man, but I am always shy with false or conventional people; people are sometimes affected from shyness, and *grow* simple." Then we talked of Carlyle: "You would like him for one day," he said, "but get tired of him, so vehement and destructive"; he gave by way of a specimen of his talk in a deep tragic voice, "For God's sake away with gigs, thousand million gigs in the world, away with them all in God's name, spoke and axle, the world will never be right until they are all swept into the lowest pit of Tophet." He often smokes with Carlyle; "Goethe once Carlyle's hero, now Cromwell his epitome of human excellence. Carlyle spoke once as if he wished

poets to be our statesmen; fancy Burns Prime Minister!" Then he said to me, "Do you know the *Odyssey*? I like it better as a whole than the *Iliad*: I should have met you before; why didn't you write? I could teach you Greek in a month, then perhaps (quoting my poem called 'The Poet's Daily Bread') you would scorn me with bitter scorn." I laughed. "I will send you the *Odyssey*, I have two copies in my portmanteau; I will be grave when next I meet you; I vary." In the course of conversation he said, "Some parts of *The Book of Revelation* are finer in English than in Greek, e.g. 'And again they said "Alleluia" and their smoke went up for ever and ever,'¹—magnificent conception, darkness and fire rolling together, for ever and ever."

Letters, 1848-9

To Aubrey de Vere
(after a visit to Scotland in 1848)

MY DEAR AUBREY,

CHELTENHAM, Oct.

I have just now on my return to Cheltenham got two letters from you, for I am one, as you know, who wander to and fro for

¹ He would quote the tenth chapter with boundless admiration: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud . . . and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. . . . And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that are therein, that there should be time no longer," or, as he translated it, "that time should be no more."

months careless of P.O. and correspondences. I am grieved to have occasioned you so much trouble about the article, but let it pass, excuses will not mend it : neither will I mention the money¹ troubles I have had, for they are dead and buried, tho' you bribe with your "great piece of news," which I take it must mean that you are going to be married ! is it so ? if so, joy to you. I am glad that you have thought of me at Kilkee by the great deeps. The sea is my delight tho' Mr. Chretien in the *Christian Examiner* says that I have no power upon him and always represent him dead asleep. I have seen many fine things in Scotland, and many fine things did I miss seeing, rolled up as they were tenfold in Scotch mists. Loch Awe too, which you call the finest, I saw. It is certainly very grand, tho' the pass disappointed me. I thought of Wordsworth's lines there, and, approving much, disapproved of much in them. What can be worse than to say to old Kilchurn Castle,

"Take then thy seat, vicegerent unproved" ?

Surely, master Aubrey, that is puffed and false. I steamed from Oban to Skye, a splendid voyage, for the whole day, with the exception of three

¹ His friends tried to persuade him to write popular short poems in magazines, but, however poor he might be, he never could or would write a line for money offered.

hours in the morning, was blue and sunny ; and I think I saw more outlines of hills than ever I saw in my life ; and exquisitely shaped are those Skye mountains. Loch Coruisk, said to be the wildest scene in the Highlands, I failed in seeing. After a fatiguing expedition over the roughest ground on a wet day we arrived at the banks of the loch, and made acquaintance with the extremest tiptoes of the hills, all else being thick wool-white fog. Dunkeld is lovely, and I delighted in Inverary, tho' there likewise I got drenched to the skin, till my very hat wept tears of ink. I rejoiced in Killeen, but on the whole perhaps I enjoyed no day more than the one I spent at Kirk Alloway by the monument of poor Burns, and the orchards, and "banks and braes of bonny Doon."¹ I made a pilgrimage thither out of love for the great peasant ; they were gathering in the wheat and the spirit of the man mingled or seemed to mingle with all I saw. I know you do not care much for him, but I do, and hold that there never was immortal poet if he be not one. Farewell. Give my best love and remembrances to all yours, and

Believe me ever yours,
A.

¹ E. FitzGerald to Fanny Kemble, 1873 : "Some thirty years ago A. Tennyson went over Burns' Ground in Dumfries. When he was one day by Doon-side,—'I can't tell how it was, Fitz, but I fell into a Passion of Tears'—And A. T. not given to the melting mood at all."—*Letters of Edward FitzGerald to Fanny Kemble*, Richard Bentley & Son, London, 1895, p. 22.

To Aubrey de Vere

[Undated.]

MY DEAR AUBREY,

I have just returned to this place whence I think I wrote to you last, and hither your letter after travelling Cheltenhamward and elsewhere followed me. I assure you I experienced a very lively gratification in finding that my recent alterations¹ had met your approval and not your's only but your mother's and sister's. I am still not quite satisfied with it, and I think that one or two of the ballads might be improved or others substituted, but I have done with it at present. I gave it up to the printer in a rage at last and left London, not having revised the last proofs, and so I see there is a mistake or two, for instance "marbled stairs" which is vile. Don't you think too that the Dedication to Harry Lushington looks very queer, dated "January, '48," the French row taking place in the February following, and such allusions and the subsequent ones made in the Epilogue! Well, I suppose that does not much matter, and I am as I said vastly gratified with your good opinion of the improvements.

I wrote so far—now I am in town for a week or so.

Now for your two queries.

¹ In "The Princess."

I have not the *Edinburgh* with me, and so cannot give you the exact passage in the critique; but I know there is mention made therein of "The Princess" coming out among the dying and the dead. Now I certainly did not mean to kill any one, and therefore I put this new line into the old king's mouth,

I trust that there is no one hurt to death, and in the old tourneys it really did happen now and then that there was only a certain amount of bruises and bangs and no death. Perhaps the Editor, not you, inserted the passage. With respect to the "Elegies,"¹ I cannot say that I have turned my attention to them lately. I do not know whether I have done anything new in that quarter since you saw them, but I believe I am going to print them, and then I need not tell you that you will be perfectly welcome to a copy, on the condition that when the book is published, this avant-courier of it shall be either sent back to me, or die the death by fire in Curragh Chase. I shall print about twenty-five copies, and let them out among friends under the same condition of either return or cremation. The review in the *Westminster* was not one of "The Princess," but of two or three of the old Poems.

I have sent you a most shabby note in return for your long and agreeable one, but pray

¹ "In Memoriam."

forgive me : I have such a heap of correspondence just now, half of which will never get answered at all.

Love to your brother and his wife, your mother and sister. I don't know, but I feel quite sorry that Caroline [Standish] is married. She did so well unmarried, and looked so pure and maidenly that I feel it quite a pity that she should have changed her state.

Ever yours, dear Aubrey,
A. TENNYSON.

The following *four* letters refer to what my father called "the highest honour I have yet received."

(1) *From Mrs. Gaskell to John Forster*

MANCHESTER, Oct. 8th, 1849.

I want to ask for your kind offices. You know Tennyson, and you know who Samuel Bamford is, a great, gaunt, stalwart Lancashire man, formerly handloom weaver, author of *Life of a Radical*, age nearly 70, and living in that state which is exactly decent poverty with his neat little apple-faced wife. They have lost their only child. Bamford is the most hearty (and it's saying a good deal) admirer of Tennyson I know. I dislike recitations exceedingly, but he repeats some of Tennyson's poems in so rapt and yet so simple a manner, utterly forgetting that any one is by in the delight of the music and the exquisite thoughts, that one can't help liking to hear him. *He* does not care

one jot whether people like him or not in his own intense enjoyment. He says when he lies awake at night, as in his old age he often does, and gets sadly thinking of the days that are gone when his child was alive, he soothes himself by repeating T.'s poems. I asked him the other day if he had got them of his own. "No," he said rather mournfully: he had been long looking out for a second-hand copy, but somehow they had not got into the old book-shops, and 14s. or 18s. (which are they?) was too much for a poor man, and then he brightened up and said, Thank God he had a good memory, and whenever he got into a house where there were Tennyson's poems he learnt as many as he could by heart. He thought he knew better than twelve, and began "Ænone," and then the "Sleeping Beauty." Now I wonder if you catch a glimpse of what I want. I thought at first of giving him the poems this Xmas, but then I thought you would perhaps ask Tennyson if he would give Bamford a copy *from himself*, which would be glorious for the old man. Dear, how he would triumph.

(2) *To John Forster*

MABLETHORPE, ALFORD,
LINCOLNSHIRE. 1849.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I got both your notes almost at the same time. I have been flying about from house to house for a long time, and yours was delivered to me at a place called Scremby Hall in this county where I was making a morning call. All that account of Sam. Bamford is very in-

teresting indeed. I reckon his admiration as the highest honour I have yet received. A lady was so charmed with the relation that I gave her the letter. Of course I will give him a copy but I shall not be in town for a fortnight. The first thing I do will be to call at Moxon's and get him one. I am here on this desolate sea-coast. My friends have fêted me in this county so long that I think it high time to move, but they will not let me go yet. How have you been, my dear boy? I trust well. In the hope of seeing you as soon as possible,

I am, yours as ever,

A. TENNYSON.¹

(3) *From Mrs. Gaskell to John Forster*

FRIDAY, Dec. 7th, 1849.

I have not yet taken my bonnet off after hunting up Bamford. First of all we went to Blakeley to his little white-washed cottage. His wife was cleaning, and regretted her "master" was not at home. He had gone into Manchester, where she did not know. I shan't go into the details of the hunting of this day. At last we pounced upon the great gray stalwart man coming out of a little old-fashioned public-house where Blakeley people put up. When I produced my book he said, "This is grand." I said, "Look at the title-page," for I saw he was fairly caught by something

¹ He inclosed to Forster for the *Examiner*, March 24th, "You might have won the poet's name": reprinted in the *Poems* (sixth ed.), 1850.

he liked in the middle of the book, and was standing reading it in the street. "Well, I am a proud man this day!" he exclaimed. Then he turned it up and down and read a bit (it was a very crowded street) and his gray face went quite brown-red with pleasure. Suddenly he stopped. "What must I do for him back again?" "Oh! you must write to him, and thank him." "I'd rather walk 20 mile than write a letter any day." "Well, then, suppose you set off this Christmas, and walk and thank Tennyson." He looked up from his book, right in my face, quite indignant. "Woman! walking won't reach him. We're on the earth don't ye see, but he's there, up above. I can no more reach him by walking than if he were an eagle or a skylark high above my head." It came fresh, warm, straight from the heart, without a notion of making a figurative speech, but as if it were literal truth, and I were a goose for not being aware of it. Then he dipped down again into his book, and began reading aloud the "Sleeping Beauty," and in the middle stopped to look at the writing again. And we left him in a sort of sleep-walking state, and only trust he will not be run over.

(4) *From Samuel Bamford to Alfred Tennyson*

BLAKELEY, Dec. 13th, 1849.

DEAR SIR,

Mrs. Gaskell a few days since presented to me your poems, with your autograph, in kind terms, and I can only say, as to the present, that I am very greatly obliged; and that you could not have done anything that would have pleased me better. Accept my most sincere thanks.

Your poems, I cannot forget them. I cannot put them away from my thoughts; the persons and the scenes they represent haunt me. I have read them all over and over, and I have not awakened once this night without

Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride
immediately recurring to my thoughts.

Oh! your "Oriana" has started the tears into my eyes, and into those of my dear wife, many a time. It is a deep thing. Your "Locksley Hall" is terribly beautiful; profoundly impressive. The departure of your "Sleeping Palace" is almost my favourite, and your "Gardener's Daughter," ah! it brings early scenes to my mind.

The story of my early love that haunts me now I'm old,
And broods within my very heart altho' 'tis well-nigh cold.

My wife, bless her! I never feel my sensibilities gushing over, but when I look I find hers are doing the same. And it has frequently been the case since I was so fortunate as to have your poems.

But your English! why it is almost unlimitedly expressive. This language of ours, what can it not be made to say? What height, what depth filled with all glorious hues, terrible glooms, and vivid flashes does it not combine and your poems exhibit all?

Are you well? Are you happy? I hope you are both. Accept my kindest wishes, and believe me to be

Yours most truly,

SAMUEL BAMFORD.

To Miss Hollway (of Spilsby) my father wrote about her cousin Miss Jean Ingelow's poems, *A Rhyming Chronicle of Incidents and Feelings*.

MY DEAR MISS HOLLWAY,

Many thanks for your very kind note. I have only just returned to town, and found the *Rhyming Chronicle*. Your cousin must be worth knowing: there are some very charming things in her book, at least it seems so to me, tho' I do not pique myself on being much of a critic at first sight, and I really have only skimmed a few pages. Yet I think I may venture to pronounce that she need not be ashamed of publishing them. Certain things I saw which I count abominations, tho' I myself in younger days have been guilty of the same, and so was Keats. I would sooner lose a pretty thought than enshrine it in such rhymes as "Eudora" "before her," "vista" "sister." She will get to hate them herself as she grows older, and it would be a pity that she should let her book go forth with these cockneyisms. If the book were not so good I should not care for these specks, but the critics will pounce upon them, and excite a prejudice. I declare I should like to know her.

I have such a heap of correspondence to answer that I must bid you good-bye. What the German lady says is very gratifying. I shall perhaps see you again in the autumn. My best remembrances to each and all of your circle.

Ever yours truly, A. TENNYSON.

P.S. Strange! that I did not see it. I turn

to the title-page, and find the book *is* published. I fancied it had only been printed. Forgive my hurry ! Well, your cousin will amend, perhaps, the errors I have mentioned, in her next edition.

On the invitation of Aubrey de Vere, my father paid his second visit to Ireland ; but he has left no record of his tour. At my request Mr. de Vere has kindly written the following account : to which he has added some reminiscences of his first hearing " In Memoriam " read in 1850.

In the year 1848 Alfred Tennyson had felt a craving to make a lonely sojourn at Bude : " I hear," he said, " that there are larger waves there than on any other part of the British coast : and must go thither and be alone with God." I persuaded him to come also to Ireland where the waves are far higher and the cliffs often rise to 800 feet and in one spot, Slieve League, to 2000 : while at the mountain's landward side are still shown the " prayer-stations " of Saint Columbkil. He passed five weeks with us at Curragh Chase, to us delightful weeks. The day before our arrival we visited the celebrated " fall " of the Shannon at Castleconnel ; over it there hung a full moon, the largest I have ever seen. The aspect might well have shaken weak nerves. It looked as if the " centrifugal " force had ceased, and the vast luminary might come down upon the earth in another hour. That night we slept in my sister's house, and she had the satisfaction of conversing with the Poet whose works she had fed on since her girlhood.

The weeks passed by only too rapidly. We drove our guest to the old Castles and Abbeys in the neighbourhood : he was shocked at the poverty of the peasantry, and the marks of havock wrought through the country by the great potato-famine : he read in the library ; and worked on a new edition of "The Princess," smoking at the same time without hindrance in our most comfortable bedroom, and protected as far as possible from noise ; he walked where he pleased alone, or in company through woods in which it was easy to lose oneself, by a cave so deep that Merlin might have slept in it to this day unawakened. In the evenings he had vocal music from Lady de Vere and her sister, Caroline Standish, and Sonatas of Mozart or Beethoven played by my eldest brother, with a power and pathos rare in an amateur. Later, he read poetry to us with a voice that doubled its power, commonly choosing pathetic pieces ; and on one occasion after finishing "A Sorrowful Tale" by Crabbe, glanced round reproachfully and said, "I do not see that any of you are weeping !" One night we turned his poem of "The Day-Dream" into an acted charade ; a beautiful girl whom he used to call "that stately maid," taking the part of the Sleeping Beauty ; and the poet himself that of the Prince who broke the spell of her slumber. Another night there was a dance which he denounced as a stupid thing, while a brilliant and amusing person, Lady G., who was accustomed to speak her mind to all alike, scolded him sharply. "How would the world get on if others went about it growling at its amusements in a voice as deep as a lion's ? I request that you will go upstairs, put on an evening coat, and ask my daughter Sophia to dance." He did so, and was the gayest of the gay for several hours, turning out moreover an excellent dancer. He

was liked all the better for always saying what came into his head. One day a young lady who sat next him at dinner, spoke of a certain marriage just announced, as a very *penniless* one. He rummaged in his pocket, extracted a penny, and slapped it down loudly close to her plate saying, "There, I give you that, for that is the God you worship." The girl was a little frightened, but more amused : they made friends ; and he promised to send her a pocket copy of Milton. Some months later she received one from England, beautifully bound.

It was a time of political excitement, and Ireland was on the brink of that silly attempt at rebellion which put back all her serious interests for a quarter of a century. Half Europe was in revolt and the prophets of the day averred that England might any day find herself involved in a general war. Some one remarked that an invasion would be more practicable in these days of steamships than in those of Nelson and Napoleon. Tennyson was a Patriot-poet like Shakespeare, who gave us the glorious dying speech of "Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," the Patriot-prince. His reply was, "Don't let them land on England's coast, or we will shatter them to pieces."

We took care that our guest should see or hear something of Ireland's quaint humours : I must find room for one story which especially amused him, and which he often retold. Returning home recently after a fortnight's absence, I had visited our old Parish Priest, Father Tim, and found him at dinner with his curate. It had been a time of great disturbance : many houses had been attacked by night, many guns borne off in triumph, and much blood shed. In answer to my enquiries he said : "The country has been quiet enough, much as usual, except one disgraceful outrage, such as no one ever heard of before in Ireland. What

would you think, Sir, of a girl being carried off by night, and no car sent for her?" It had long been a traditional usage in Ireland, when parents on unreasonable grounds resisted their daughter's marriage, for her lover and his friends to carry her off, apparently by force, but in reality with her connivance. After a few days the parents had to accept what they could not then avert; but the abduction was a ceremonial in which the Sabine Maid was always treated with entire respect. "Sir, I ask you," said Father Tim to his curate, laying down his knife and fork, and his old face flushing up, "as long as you are on the mission, did you ever hear of a girl being carried off, and no car sent for her?" "Never, Sir," was the answer, "and it would not be a common car, but a side-car." "Yes," Father Tim rejoined, "and moreover a woman would be sent for her with the party, to keep her in courage." "To be sure there would," the curate replied; "and a most respectable woman." For several minutes the affirmation and the response were alternated more and more loudly and with stronger gesticulations; "A car would be sent!" "Aye, and a side-car!" "A woman would be sent!" "Aye, and a most respectable woman!" The old priest ended, "I am afraid old Ireland is going to the bad! Well, thank Heaven it did not happen in my parish; but it happened within a hundred yards of it! A girl of the Molonys, one of the old stock!" Neither priest finished his poor dinner of bacon and cabbage that day. This violation of traditional etiquette led to consequences which justified Father Tim's last words, "Well, God is good! it did not happen in my parish!" For more than two years that parish had been the prey of eight marauders who roamed at large, plundering or making the farmers pay black-mail. They defied alike magistrate, police

and country-gentlemen; for though every one knew who they were, no one dared to give information. Not so that daughter of the old stock. The rogues had carried her to the house of an old woman in complicity with the enterprise, but who, on recognizing in the girl a fifth cousin of her aunt's, placed her in her own bed and sent off the adventurers without a glass of whisky. At the risk of her life the girl went to a magistrate, gave information against the gang, and promised to swear to it in Court, on one condition. It was that one man should not be proceeded against. The other seven, she affirmed, were blackguards, who had not so much as given her time to dress herself "anyway tidy"; and who had dragged her without a shoe on her feet through three muddy fields; but there was one man of a better sort who had "behaved mighty polished" to her, hoisting her up on his shoulders once when they crossed a bog. The "polished" man was forgiven, and probably begged pardon of Father Tim, and returned to his duties: the other seven were transported, and probably made their fortunes in the Colonies; and the parish had peace.

Alfred Tennyson's desire to see cliffs and waves revived, and we sent him to our cousin, Maurice Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry, who lived at Valencia where they are seen at their best. On his way thither he slept at Mount Trenchard, the residence of Lord Monteagle, and I led him to the summit of Knock Patrick, the farthest spot in the South West to which Ireland's Apostle, Patriarch and Patron, advanced. There while from far and near from both sides of the Shannon the people flocked round him, Saint Patrick preached his far-famed sermon and gave his benediction to the Land, its mountains and its plains, its pastures, its forests, its rivers and the sands under the rivers.

The sunset was one of extraordinary but minatory beauty. It gave, I remember, a darksome glory to the vast and desolate expanse with all its creeks and inlets from the Shannon, lighted the green islands in the mouth of the Fergus, fired the ruined Castle of Shanid, a stronghold of the Desmonds, one of a hundred which they were said to have possessed. The western clouds hung low, a mass of crimson and gold; while, from the ledge of a nearer one, down plunged a glittering flood empurpled like wine. The scene was a thoroughly Irish one; and gave a stormy welcome to the Sassenach Bard. The next morning he pursued his way alone to Valencia. He soon wrote that he had enjoyed it. He had found there the highest waves that Ireland knows, cliffs that at one spot rise to the height of 600 feet, tamarisks and fuchsias that no sea-winds can intimidate, and the old "Knight of Kerry," who, at the age of nearly 80, preserved the spirits, the grace and the majestic beauty of days gone by—as chivalrous a representative of Desmond's great Norman House as it had ever put forth in those times when it fought side by side with the greatest Gaelic Houses, for Ireland's ancient faith, and the immemorial rights of its Palatinate.¹ Afterwards Tennyson visited Killarney but

¹ On his eighty-second birthday my father received the following letter:

CALVERLEY PARK, TUNBRIDGE WELLS,
August 6th, 1891.

"Long life to your honour," as Irish peasants used to say, and so say I, the man who was working the State quarry, on the Island of Valencia, when you spent a few days there in 1848, Chartist times in London and Fenian times in Ireland. I remember your telling us, not without some glee, how a Valencian Fenian stealthily dogged your footsteps up the mountain and coming at last close to your ear, whispered, "Be you from France?"

Your sonorous reading to us after dinner sundry truculent

remained there only a few days ; yet that visit bequeathed a memorial. The echoes of the bugle at Killarney on that loveliest of lakes inspired the song introduced into the second edition of his "Princess," beginning

The splendour falls on castle walls.

It is but due to Killarney that *both* the parents of that lyric should be remembered in connection with "that fair child between them born" ; and through that song, Killarney will be recalled to the memory of many who have seen yet half forgotten it. When they read those stanzas, and yet more when they hear them fittingly sung, they will see again, as in a dream, the reach of its violet-coloured waters where they reflect the "Purple Mountain," the "Elfland" of its Black Valley, "Croom-a-doof," the silver river that winds and flashes through wood and rock, connecting the mystic "Upper Lake," and the beetling rock of the "Eagle's Nest"

passages in Daniel O'Connell's *History of Ireland*, which happened to be lying on my table, has lingered in my ears ever since. Seeing among my few books all that your friend Carlyle had up to that time published, you told me you thought he had nothing more to say. I was often reminded of this whilst reading his subsequent *Cromwell* and *Frederick and Latter Days*, and how near that was to the truth. You will hardly have forgotten the old Knight of Kerry, the owner of the Island, his dignified presence and his redolence of Grattan and Curran and Castlereagh and the Irish Parliament in which he sat for many years. I don't know whether "the rude imperious surge" which lashes the sounding shore of the Island ever drew from you, as I had hoped, some "hoarse rough verse," some of that roar, which tells us, as "music tells us, of what in all our life we have never known, and never will know."

With the "troops of friends" this day wishing you long life, heartily joins the ci-devant quarryman and

Yours truly, BEWICKE BLACKBURNE.
(*Now also Octogenarian.*)

with the two larger and sunnier but not lovelier lakes. Before them again will rise Dinis Island, with its embowered coves and their golden sands, the mountain gardens of Glenna haunted by murmurs of the cascade, not distant, but shrouded by the primeval oak-woods. They will look again on that island, majestic at once and mournful, Inisfallen, its grey-stemmed and solemn groves, its undulating lawns, which embosom the ruins of that Abbey, the shelter from century to century of Ireland's Annalists. They will muse again in the yew-roofed cloister of Muckross, and glide once more by its caverned and fantastic rocks, and promontories fringed by arbutus brakes, with their dark yet shining leaves, their scarlet berries and their waxen flowers. Whatever is fairest in other lakes they will see here combined, as if Nature had amused herself by publishing a volume of poetic selections from all her works. As the vision fades, their eyes will rest long on the far mountains that girdle all that beauty, mountains here and there dark with those yew-forests through which the wild deer of old escaped from the stag-hounds of MacCarthyismore. It is marvellous that so many of the chief characteristics of Killarney should have found place in a poem so short.

We met next in London. Few of the hours I spent with Alfred survive with such a pathetic sweetness and nearness in my recollection as those which are associated with that time and with "In Memoriam," which, as he told me, he once thought of entitling "Fragments of an Elegy." Soon after this he published the poem.

I went to him very late each night, and he read many of the poems to me or discussed them with me till the early hours of the morning. The tears often ran down his face as he read, without the slightest apparent consciousness of them on his part. The pathos

and grandeur of these poems were to me greatly increased by the voice which rather intoned than recited them, and which, as was obvious, could not possibly have given them utterance in any manner not thus musical. Sometimes towards the close of a stanza his voice dropped ; but I avoided the chance of thus losing any part of the meaning by sitting beside him, and glancing at the pieces he read. They were written in a long and narrow manuscript book, which assisted him to arrange the poems in due order by bringing many of them at once before his eye. As I walked home alone in the early mornings, the noises had ceased in each "long unlovely street" ; and the deep voice which had so long charmed me followed me still, and seemed to waft me along as if I had glided onward half-asleep in a gondola. I have ever regarded "In Memoriam" as the finest of the Poet's works. As in the case of Dante, a great sorrow had been the harbinger of a song greater still : Dante had vowed to celebrate Beatrice as no other woman had ever been celebrated ; and he kept that vow. The Northern Poet had also in early youth lost his chief friend, and after the lapse of seventeen years commended him to a fame such as neither "Lycidas" nor "Adonais" had ever inherited. Many of Tennyson's poems are "of imagination all compact." In "In Memoriam" imagination claims less, comparatively, to win more. In this work each successive feeling and thought ascend from the depths of the Poet's heart, as the fountain's bubbles mount from the gold sands beneath it, and pass thence through the imagination, in progress to the sympathies of mankind. Natural description is here too invested with its finest function, for throughout it blends itself most subtly with the human affections, now adding to their sorrow, and now assuaging it : and

here Poetic Art finds its aptest opportunities, for each of the pieces, while it constitutes part of a great whole, is itself so brief that it admits of the highest, most palpable perfection of shape. Tennyson was a true artist because he was not an artist only. He understood the relations in which Art stands to Nature and to fact. An incident will illustrate this remark. It had often seemed to me that though "In Memoriam" had been designed by its author chiefly as a monument raised to his friend, it was also regarded by him as a work which carried a spiritual teaching with it: it taught that the history of a great sorrow is the history of a soul; and that a soul which passes bravely through the dark shadow of the planet of grief must, on emerging thence, meet the sunrise at its remoter side. Long after the publication of "In Memoriam" I reminded him of what he had let fall on that subject, and added that such a scheme of poetic thought if carried out to the full, would create, in a lyrical form, a work not without much analogy to Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the first part of which is all woe, though the latter cantos of the second part, the "Purgatorio," abound in consolation and peace; while the third part, the "Paradiso," is the song of triumph and of joy. I remarked that many of the later pieces in the second part of "In Memoriam" were also songs of consolation and peace, and suggested that perhaps he might at some later time give to the whole work its third part, or Paradise. The poet's answer was this: "I have written what I have felt and known; and I will never write anything else."

CHAPTER IV

"IN MEMORIAM"

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

HALF a mile to the south of Clevedon in Somersetshire, on a lonely hill, stands Clevedon Church, "obscure and solitary," overlooking a wide expanse of water, where the Severn flows into the Bristol Channel. It is dedicated to St. Andrew, the chancel being the original fishermen's chapel.

Break, break, break

On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

And I would that my tongue could utter

The thoughts that arise in me!

O well for the fisherman's boy,

That he shouts with his sister at play!

O well for the sailor lad,

That he sings in his boat on the bay

And the stately ships go on

To their haven under the hill—

But O for the touch of a vanished hand,

And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,

At the foot of thy crags, O Sea—

But the tender grace of a day that is dead

Will never come back to me. Anonymous

From the graveyard you can hear the music of the tide as it washes against the low cliffs not a hundred yards away. In the manor aisle of the church, under which is the vault of the Hallams, may be read this epitaph to Arthur Hallam, written by his father :

TO

THE MEMORY OF

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM

ELDEST SON OF HENRY HALLAM ESQUIRE

AND OF JULIA MARIA HIS WIFE

DAUGHTER OF SIR ABRAHAM ELTON BARONET

OF CLEVEDON COURT

WHO WAS SNATCHED AWAY BY SUDDEN DEATH

AT VIENNA ON SEPTEMBER 15TH 1833

IN THE TWENTY-THIRD YEAR OF HIS AGE

AND NOW IN THIS OBSCURE AND SOLITARY CHURCH

REPOSE THE MORTAL REMAINS OF

ONE TOO EARLY LOST FOR PUBLIC FAME

BUT ALREADY CONSPICUOUS AMONG HIS CONTEMPORARIES

FOR THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GENIUS

THE DEPTH OF HIS UNDERSTANDING

THE NOBLENES OF HIS DISPOSITION

THE FERVOUR OF HIS PIETY

AND THE PURITY OF HIS LIFE

VALE DULCISIME

VALE DILECTISSIME DESIDERATISSIME

REQUIESCAS IN PACE

PATER AC MATER HIC POSTHAC REQUIESCAMUS TECUM

USQUE AD TUBAM

In this part of the church there is also another tablet to the memory of Henry Hallam, the epitaph written by my father : who thought the simpler the epitaph, the better it would become the simple and noble man, whose work speaks for him :

HERE WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN RESTS
HENRY HALLAM THE HISTORIAN

It was not until May 1850 that “In Memoriam” was printed and given to a few friends. Shortly afterwards it was published, first of all anonymously, but the authorship was soon discovered.

The earliest jottings, begun in 1833, of the “Elegies” as they were then called, were nearly lost in a London lodging, for my father was always careless about his manuscripts.

Mr. Coventry Patmore wrote to me about this :

The letter from your father concerning the MS. of “In Memoriam” I gave to the late Sir John Simeon, thinking that he ought to have it, as he had the MS.¹ itself. This letter asked me to visit the lodging in Mornington Place, Hampstead Road, which he had occupied two or three weeks before, and to try to recover the MS., which he had left in a closet where he

¹ This MS., given to Sir John Simeon by my father, has been generously returned to me by Lady Simeon for presentation to the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

was used to keep some of his provisions. The landlady said that no such book had been left, but I insisted on looking for it myself, and found it where your father said it was.

The letter alluded to is given below :

BONCHURCH, I.W.,
Feb. 28th, 1850.

MY DEAR COVENTRY,

I went up to my room yesterday to get my book of *Elegies*: you know what I mean, a long, butcher-ledger-like book. I was going to read one or two to an artist here: I could not find it. I have some obscure remembrance of having lent it to you. If so, all is well, if not, will you go to my old chambers and institute a vigorous inquiry? I was coming up to-day on purpose to look after it, but as the weather is so furious I have yielded to the wishes of my friends here to stop till to-morrow. I shall be, I expect, in town to-morrow at 25 M. P. when I shall be glad to see you. At 9.10 p.m. the train in which I come gets into London. I shall be in Mornington Place about 10 o'clock I suppose. Perhaps you would in your walk Museum-ward call on Mrs. Lloyd and tell her to prepare for me. With best remembrances to Mrs. Patmore,

Believe me ever yours,

A. TENNYSON.

At first the reviews of the volume were not on the whole sympathetic. One critic in a leading journal, for instance, considered that “a great deal of poetic feeling had been wasted,” and “much shallow art spent on the tenderness shown to an Amaryllis of the Chancery Bar.” Another referred to the poem as follows : “These touching lines evidently come from the full heart of the widow of a military man.” However, men like Maurice and Robertson thought that the author had made a definite step towards the unification of the highest religion and philosophy with the progressive science of the day ; and that he was the one poet who “through almost the agonies of a death-struggle” had made an effective stand against his own doubts and difficulties and those of the time, “on behalf of those first principles which underlie all creeds, which belong to our earliest childhood, and on which the wisest and best have rested through all ages ; that all is right ; that darkness shall be clear ; that God and Time are the only interpreters ; that Love is King ; that the Immortal is in us ; that, which is the keynote of the whole, ‘All is well, tho’ Faith and Form be sundered in the night of Fear.’”¹ Scientific leaders like Herschel, Owen, Sedgwick and Tyndall regarded

¹ Robertson goes so far as to say : “To my mind and heart the *most* satisfactory things that have been ever said on the future state are contained in this poem.”

The best analysis of “In Memoriam” is by Miss Chapman (Macmillan and Co.).

him as a champion of Science, and cheered him with words of genuine admiration for his love of Nature, for the eagerness with which he welcomed all the latest scientific discoveries, and for his trust in truth. Science indeed in his opinion was one of the main forces tending to disperse the superstition that still darkens the world. A review which he thought one of the ablest was that by Mr. Gladstone. From this review I quote the following to show that in Gladstone's opinion my father had not over-estimated Arthur Hallam.

In 1850 Mr. Tennyson gave to the world under the title of "In Memoriam," perhaps the richest oblation ever offered by the affection of friendship at the tomb of the departed. The memory of Arthur Henry Hallam, who died suddenly in 1833, at the age of twenty-two, will doubtless live chiefly in connection with this volume. But he is well known to have been one who, if the term of his days had been prolonged, would have needed no aid from a friendly hand, would have built his own enduring monument, and would have bequeathed to his country a name in all likelihood greater than that of his very distinguished father. The writer of this paper was, more than half a century ago, in a condition to say

"I marked him
As a far Alp ; and loved to watch the sunrise
Dawn on his ample brow."¹

There perhaps was no one among those who were

¹ De Vere's *Mary Tudor*, iv. 1.

blessed with his friendship, nay, as we see, not even Mr. Tennyson,¹ who did not feel at once bound closely to him by commanding affection, and left far behind by the rapid, full and rich development of his ever-searching mind ; by his

“ All-comprehensive tenderness,
All-subtilising intellect.”

It would be easy to show what in the varied forms of human excellence, he might, had life been granted him, have accomplished ; much more difficult to point the finger and to say, “ This he never could have done.” Enough remains from among his early efforts, to accredit whatever mournful witness may now be borne of him. But what can be a nobler tribute than this, that for seventeen years after his death a poet, fast rising towards the lofty summits of his art, found that young fading image the richest source of his inspiration, and of thoughts that gave him buoyancy for a flight such as he had not hitherto attained.²

Bishop Westcott and Professor Henry Sidgwick have written me interesting letters which respectively give the impressions the poem made on Cambridge men in 1850, and in 1860, and I quote them *in extenso*.

The Bishop writes :

When “ In Memoriam ” appeared, I felt (as I feel if possible more strongly now) that the hope of man lies in the historic realization of the Gospel. I rejoiced in the Introduction, which appeared to me to be the mature summing up after an interval of the many strains

¹ See “ In Memoriam,” cix., cx., cxl., cxii., cxiii.

² Gladstone’s *Gleanings of Past Years*, vol. ii. pp. 136, 137.

of thought in the "Elegies." Now the stress of controversy is over, I think so still. As I look at my original copy of "In Memoriam," I recognise that what impressed me most was your father's splendid faith (in the face of the frankest acknowledgment of every difficulty) in the growing purpose of the sum of life, and in the noble destiny of the individual man as he offers himself for the fulfilment of his little part (LIV., LXXXI., LXXXII. and the closing stanzas). This faith has now largely entered into our common life, and it seems to me to express a lesson of the Gospel which the circumstances of all time encourage us to master.

Professor Sidgwick writes :

After thinking over the matter, it has seemed to me better to write to you a somewhat different kind of letter from that which I originally designed : a letter not primarily intended for publication, though I wish you to feel at liberty to print any part of it which you may find suitable, but primarily intended to serve rather as a "document" on which you may base any statements you may wish to make as to the impression produced by "In Memoriam." I have decided to adopt this course : because I want to write with rather more frank egotism than I should otherwise like to show. I want to do this, because in describing the impression made on me by the poem, I ought to make clear the point of view from which I approached it, and the attitude of thought which I retained under its influence. In what follows I shall be describing chiefly my own experiences : but I shall allow myself sometimes to say "we" rather than "I," meaning by "we" my generation, as known to me, through converse with intimate friends.

To begin, then : our views on religious matters were not, at any rate after a year or two of the discussion started in 1860 by *Essays and Reviews*, really in harmony with those which we found suggested by “In Memoriam.” They were more sceptical and less Christian, in any strict sense of the word : certainly this was the case with myself : I remember feeling that Clough *represented* my individual habits of thought and sentiment more than your father, although as a poet he *moved* me less. And this more sceptical attitude has remained mine through life ; while at the same time I feel that the beliefs in God and in immortality are vital to human well-being.

Hence the most important influence of “In Memoriam” on my thought, apart from its poetic charm as an expression of personal emotion, opened in a region, if I may so say, deeper down than the difference between Theism and Christianity : it lay in the unparalleled combination of intensity of feeling with comprehensiveness of view and balance of judgment, shown in presenting the *deepest* needs and perplexities of humanity. And this influence, I find, has increased rather than diminished as years have gone on, and as the great issues between Agnostic Science and Faith have become continually more prominent. In the sixties I should say that these deeper issues were somewhat obscured by the discussions on Christian dogma, and Inspiration of Scripture, etc. You may remember Browning’s reference to this period—

“ The Essays and Reviews debate
Begins to tell on the public mind
And Colenso’s words have weight.”

During these years we were absorbed in struggling

for freedom of thought in the trammels of a historical religion : and perhaps what we sympathized with most in "In Memoriam" at this time, apart from the personal feeling, was the defence of "honest doubt," the reconciliation of knowledge and faith in the introductory poem, and the hopeful trumpet-ring of the lines on the New Year—

Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace,

and generally the *forward* movement of the thought.

Well, the years pass, the struggle with what Carlyle used to call "Hebrew old clothes" is over, Freedom is won, and what does Freedom bring us to? It brings us face to face with atheistic science : the faith in God and Immortality, which we had been struggling to clear from superstition, suddenly seems to be *in the air* : and in seeking for a firm basis for this faith we find ourselves in the midst of the "fight with death" which "In Memoriam" so powerfully presents.

What "In Memoriam" did for us, for me at least, in this struggle was to impress on us the ineffaceable and ineradicable conviction that *humanity* will not and cannot acquiesce in a godless world : the "man in men" will not do this, whatever individual men may do, whatever they may temporarily feel themselves driven to do, by following methods which they cannot abandon to the conclusions to which these methods at present seem to lead.

The force with which it impressed this conviction was not due to the *mere intensity* of its expression of the feelings which Atheism outrages and Agnosticism ignores : but rather to its expression of them along with a reverent docility to the lessons of science which also belongs to the essence of the thought of our age.

I remember being struck with a note in *Nature*, at the time of your father's death, which dwelt on this last-mentioned aspect of his work, and regarded him as pre-eminently the Poet of Science. I have always felt this characteristic important in estimating his effect on his generation. Wordsworth's attitude towards Nature was one that, so to say, left Science unregarded : the Nature for which Wordsworth stirred our feelings was Nature as known by simple observation and interpreted by religious and sympathetic intuition. But for your father the physical world is always the world as known to us through physical science : the scientific view of it dominates his thoughts about it ; and his general acceptance of this view is real and sincere, even when he utters the intensest feeling of its inadequacy to satisfy our deepest needs. Had it been otherwise, had he met the atheistic tendencies of modern Science with more confident defiance, more confident assertion of an Intuitive Faculty of theological knowledge, overriding the results laboriously reached by empirical science, I think his antagonism to these tendencies would have been far less impressive.

I always feel this strongly in reading the memorable lines :

“If e'er, when faith had fallen asleep” down to “I have felt.”¹

At this point, if the stanzas had stopped here, we should have shaken our heads and said, “Feeling must not usurp the function of Reason. Feeling is not knowing. It is the duty of a rational being to follow truth wherever it leads.”

But the poet's instinct knows this ; he knows that

¹ See p. 110.

this usurpation by Feeling of the function of Reason is too bold and confident; accordingly in the next stanza he gives the turn to humility in the protest of Feeling which is required (I think) to win the assent of the "man in men" at this stage of human thought.

These lines I can never read without tears. I feel in them the indestructible and inalienable minimum of faith which humanity cannot give up because it is necessary for life; and which I know that I, at least so far as the man in me is deeper than the methodical thinker, cannot give up.

If the possibility of a "godless world" is excluded, the faith thus restored is, for the poet, unquestionably a form of Christian faith: there seems to him then no reason for doubting that the

Sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue,

and the marvel of the life continued after the bodily death, were a manifestation of the "immortal love" which by faith we embrace as the essence of the Divine nature. "If the dead rise not, Christ is not risen": but if we may believe that they rise, then it seems to him, we may and must believe the main drift of the Gospel story; though we may transiently wonder why the risen Lord told His disciples only of life, and nothing of "what it is to die."¹

From this point of view the note of Christian faith struck in the introductory stanzas is in harmony with all that follows. And yet I have always felt that in a certain sense the effect of the introduction does not quite represent the effect of the poem. Faith, in the

¹ See Browning's "Epistle containing the Strange Medical Experience of Karshish."

introduction, is too completely triumphant. I think this is inevitable, because so far as the thought-debate presented by the poem is summed up, it must be summed up on the side of Faith. Faith must give the last word: but the last word is not the whole utterance of the truth: the whole truth is that assurance and doubt must alternate in the moral world in which we at present live, somewhat as night and day alternate in the physical world. The revealing visions come and go; when they come we *feel* that we *know*: but in the intervals we must pass through states in which all is dark, and in which we can only struggle to hold the conviction that

Power is with us in the night
Which makes the darkness and the light
And dwells not in the light alone.

“It must be remembered,” writes my father, “that this is a poem, *not* an actual biography. It is founded on our friendship, on the engagement of Arthur Hallam to my sister, on his sudden death at Vienna, just before the time fixed for their marriage, and on his burial at Clevedon Church. The poem concludes with the marriage of my youngest sister Cecilia. It was meant to be a kind of *Divina Commedia*, ending with happiness. The sections were written at many different places, and as the phases of our intercourse came to my memory and suggested them. I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole, or for publication, until I found that I had written so many. The different moods of sorrow as in a drama are dramatically

given, and my conviction that fear, doubts, and suffering will find answer and relief only through Faith in a God of Love. 'I' is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking thro' him. After the Death of A. H. H., the divisions of the poem are made by First Xmas Eve (Section xxviii.), Second Xmas (Lxxviii.¹), Third Xmas Eve (civ. and cv. etc.). I myself did not see Clevedon till years after the burial of A. H. H. Jan. 3rd, 1834, and then in later editions of 'In Memoriam' I altered the word 'chancel,' which was the word used by Mr. Hallam in his Memoir, to 'dark church.' As to the localities in which the poems were written, some were written in Lincolnshire, some in London, Essex, Gloucestershire, Wales, anywhere where I happened to be."²

¹ No. LXXII. refers to the first anniversary of the death Sept. 15th, 1833. No. c. to the farewell of the family to Somersby in 1837.

² In a letter to Mr. Malan written at the same time as the above note, in reply to enquiries as to whether, in "In Memoriam," he has copied Statius, or Ovid's "Epicedion," or the "Sorrow of Arcadius Etruscus," or "Spring Stanzas to Domitian," etc. etc. my father writes :

Nov. 14th, 1883.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry that your letter has gone so long unanswered, but my eyes are so bad, and I have such a large correspondence that I find it impossible to answer everybody. It is news to me that the remains of A. H. H. were landed at Dover. I had always believed that the ship which brought them put in at Bristol. As to his being buried in the chancel, Mr. Hallam in a printed memoir of his son, states that it was so. * * * I can assure you I am

“And as for the metre of ‘In Memoriam’ I had no notion till 1880 that Lord Herbert of Cherbury had written his occasional verses in the same metre. I believed myself the originator of the metre, until after ‘In Memoriam’ came out, when some one told me that Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney had used it. The following poems were omitted from ‘In Memoriam’ when I published, because I thought them redundant.”¹

The Grave (originally No. LVII.). (*Unpublished*)

I keep no more a lone distress,
The crowd have come to see thy grave,
Small thanks or credit shall I have,
But these shall see it none the less.

The happy maiden’s tears are free
And she will weep and give them way ;
Yet one unschool’d in want will say
“The dead are dead and let them be.”

innocent as far as I am aware of knowing one line of Statius ; and of Ovid’s “Epicedion” I never heard. I have searched for it in vain in a little three volume edition of Ovid which I have here, but that does not contain this poem ; nor have I ever heard of the “Sorrow of Arcadius Etruscus,” nor of the “Spring Stanzas to Domitian.” The memoir of his son by Mr. Hallam, to which I allude, was printed merely for private circulation : and whether he repeated the statement of the chancel burial in the published Memoir I do not know.

Yours very truly,
A. TENNYSON.

¹ “O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me” was added in 1851.

Another whispers sick with loss :

“O let the simple slab remain !

The ‘Mercy Jesu’ in the rain !

The ‘Miserere’ in the moss !

“I love the daisy weeping dew,

I hate the trim-set plots of art !”

My friend, thou speakest from the heart,

But look, for these are nature too.

To A. H. H. (originally No. cviii.).

(Unpublished)

Young is the grief I entertain,

And ever new the tale she tells,

And ever young the face that dwells

With reason cloister’d in the brain :

Yet grief deserves a nobler name :

She spurs an imitative will ;

’Tis shame to fail so far, and still

My failing shall be less my shame :

Considering what mine eyes have seen,

And all the sweetness which thou wast

In thy beginnings in the past,

And all the strength thou wouldst have been :

A master mind with master minds,

An orb repulsive of all hate,

A will concentric with all fate,

A life four-square to all the winds.

The Victor Hours (originally No. CXXVII.).
(*Unpublished*)

Are those the far-famed Victor Hours
That ride to death the griefs of men ?
I fear not ; if I fear'd them, then
Is this blind flight the winged Powers.

Behold, ye cannot bring but good,
And see, ye dare not touch the truth,
Nor Sorrow beauteous in her youth,
Nor Love that holds a constant mood.

Ye must be wiser than your looks,
Or wise yourselves, or wisdom-led,
Else this wild whisper round my head
Were idler than a flight of rooks.

Go forward ! crumble down a throne,
Dissolve a world, condense a star,
Unsocket all the joints of war,
And fuse the peoples into one.

That my father was a student of the Bible, those who have read “In Memoriam” know. He also eagerly read all notable works within his reach relating to the Bible, and traced with deep interest such fundamental truths as underlie the great religions of the world. He hoped that the Bible¹ would be more and more studied

¹ He also said : “The Bible ought to be read, were it only for the sake of the grand English in which it is written, an education in itself.”

by all ranks of people, and expounded simply by their teachers; for he maintained that the religion of a people could never be founded on mere moral philosophy: and that it could only come home to them in the simple, noble thoughts and facts of a Scripture like ours.¹

Soon after his marriage he took to reading different systems of philosophy,² yet none particularly influenced him. The result I think is shown in a more ordered arrangement of religious, metaphysical and scientific thought throughout the "Idylls" and his later works. "In Poems like 'De Profundis' and the 'Ancient Sage,'" Jowett said, "he often brings up metaphysical truths from the deepest depths." But as a rule he knew that poetry must touch on metaphysical topics rather by allusion than systematically. In the following pages I shall not give any of his subtler arguments; but only attempt to illustrate from "In Memoriam," with some of the other poems, and from his conversation, the *general* everyday attitude of his mind toward the highest problems that confront us. In dealing with these none was readier in the discovery of fallacies, none was more resolute in proclaiming what seemed to him realities.

¹ See Nos. xxxvi., lxi., lxxxiv. last stanza but one.

² Spinoza, Berkeley, Kant, Schlegel, Fichte, Hegel, Ferrier, were among the books added to his library.

His creed, he always said, he would not formulate, for people would not understand him if he did ; but he considered that his poems expressed the principles at the foundation of his faith.

He thought, with Arthur Hallam, that “the essential feelings of religion subsist in the utmost diversity of forms,” that “different language does not always imply different opinions, nor different opinions any difference in *real* faith.” “It is impossible,” he said, “to imagine that the Almighty will ask you, when you come before Him in the next life, what your particular form of creed was : but the question will rather be, ‘Have you been true to yourself, and given in My Name a cup of cold water to one of these little ones ? ’”

“This is a terrible age of unfaith,” he would say. “I hate utter unfaith, I cannot endure that men should sacrifice everything at the cold altar of what with their imperfect knowledge they choose to call truth and reason. One can easily lose all belief, through giving up the continual thought and care for spiritual things.”

Again, “I tell you the nation without faith is doomed ; mere intellectual life—however advanced or however perfected—will not fill the void.”

And again, “In this vale of Time the hills of Time often shut out the mountains of Eternity.”

My father's friend, the Bishop of Ripon, writes :

With those who are impatient of *all* spiritual truth he had no sympathy whatever ; but he had a sympathy with those who were impatient of the formal statement of truth, only because he felt that all formal statements of truth must of necessity fall below the greatness and the grandeur of the truth itself. There is a reverent impatience of forms, and there is an irreverent impatience of them. An irreverent impatience of formal dogma means impatience of all spiritual truth ; but a reverent impatience of formal dogma may be but the expression of the feeling that the truth must be larger, purer, nobler than any mere human expression or definition of it. With this latter attitude of mind he had sympathy, and he expressed that sympathy in song : he could understand those who seemed

To have reach'd a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form.

He urged men to "cling to faith, beyond the forms of faith."¹ But while he did this he also recognised clearly the importance and the value of definitions of truth, and his counsel to the very man who prided himself upon his emancipation from forms was :

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

¹ Cf. vol. iv. chap. xi. 1st paragraph.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good :
 Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
 To which she links a truth divine !¹

He warned the man proud of his emancipation from formal faith, that in a world of so many confusions he might meet with ruin, “Ev’n for want of such a type.” And we are not surprised, knowing how insidious are the evil influences which gather round us :

Hold thou the good ; define it well,
 For fear Divine Philosophy
 Should push beyond her mark, and be
 Procuress to the lords of Hell.

And thus he had sympathy with those who feel that faith is larger and nobler than form, and at the same time he had tenderness and appreciation for those who find their faith helped by form. To him, as to so many, truth is so infinitely great that all we can do with our poor human utterances is to try and clothe it in such language as will make it clear to ourselves, and clear to those to whom God sends us with a message, but meanwhile, above us and our thoughts—above our

¹ Jowett wrote about my father’s “defence of honest doubt” as compared with this passage : “Can we find any reconciliation of these varying utterances of the same mind ? I think that we may. For we may argue that truth kept back is the greatest source of doubt and suspicion : that faith cannot survive without enquiry, and that the doubt which is raised may be the step upward to a higher faith. And so we arrive at the conclusion that truth is good, and to be received thankfully and fearlessly by all who are capable of receiving it. But on the other hand it is not always to be imparted in its entirety to those who cannot understand it, and whose minds would be puzzled and overwhelmed by it.”

broken lights—God in His mercy, God in His love, God in His infinite nature is greater than all.

Assuredly Religion was no nebulous abstraction for him. He consistently emphasized his own belief in what he called the Eternal Truths ; in an Omnipotent, Omnipresent and All-loving God, Who has revealed Himself through the human attribute of the highest self-sacrificing love ; in the freedom of the human will ; and in the immortality of the soul. But he asserted that “Nothing worthy proving can be proven,” and that even as to the great laws which are the basis of Science, “We have but faith, we cannot know.” He dreaded the dogmatism of sects and rash definitions of God. “I dare hardly name His Name” he would say, and accordingly he named Him in “The Ancient Sage” the “Nameless.” “But take away belief in the self-conscious personality of God,” he said, “and you take away the backbone of the world.” “On God and God-like men we build our trust.” A week before his death I was sitting by him, and he talked long of the Personality and of the Love of God, “That God, Whose eyes consider the poor,” “Who catereth even for the sparrow.” “I should,” he said, “infinitely rather feel myself the most miserable wretch on the face of the earth with a God above, than the highest type of man standing alone.” He would allow that God is unknow-

able in “his whole world-self, and all-in-all,” and that therefore there was some force in the objection made by some people to the word “Personality,” as being “anthropomorphic,” and that perhaps “Self-consciousness” or “Mind” might be clearer to them: but at the same time he insisted that, although “man is like a thing of nought” in “the boundless plan,” our highest view of God must be more or less anthropomorphic: and that “Personality,” as far as our intelligence goes, is the widest definition and includes “Mind,” “Self-consciousness,”¹ “Will,” “Love” and other attributes of the Real, the Supreme, “the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity Whose name is Holy.”

Jowett asked him to write an anthem about God for Balliol Chapel and he wrote “The Human Cry”:

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and
in Thee;

We feel we are something—*that* also has
come from Thee;

We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt
help us to be.

Hallowed be Thy name—Hallelujah!

When his last book was in proof, we spoke

¹ “A. T. thinks it ridiculous to believe in a God and deny his consciousness, and was amused at some one who said of him that he had versified Hegelianism.”—Jowett, MS. Note.

together of the ultimate expression of his own calm faith at the end of his life :

That Love which is and was
My Father and my Brother and my God.¹

Everywhere throughout the Universe he saw the glory and greatness of God, and the science of Nature was particularly dear to him. Every new fact which came within his range was carefully weighed. As he exulted in the wilder aspects of Nature (see for instance sect. xv.) and revelled in the thunderstorm ; so he felt a joy in her orderliness ; he felt a rest in her steadfastness, patient progress and hopefulness ; the same seasons ever returned ; the same stars wheeled in their courses ; the flowers² and trees blossomed and the birds sang yearly in their appointed months ; and he had a triumphant appreciation of her ever-new revelations of beauty. One of the "In Memoriam" poems, written at Barmouth,³ gives pre-eminently his sense of the joyous peace in Nature, and he would quote it

¹ To enquiries as to the meaning of the words "Immortal Love" in the Introduction to "In Memoriam," he explained that he had used "Love" in the same sense as St. John (1 John, chap. iv.). "The Word" also in No. xxxvi. was "The Word" as used by St. John, the Revelation of the Eternal Thought of the Universe.

² Picking up a daisy as we walked, and looking close to its crimson-tipt leaves he said : "Does not this look like a thinking Artificer, one who wishes to ornament ?"—MS. Note, E. F. G.

³ He notes this in his own hand.

in this context along with his Spring and Bird songs :

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,
And shadowing down the horned flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and Death,
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odour streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper “Peace.”¹

But he was occasionally much troubled with the intellectual problem of the apparent profusion and waste of life and by the vast amount of sin and suffering throughout the world, for these seemed to militate against the idea of the Omnipotent and All-loving Father.

No doubt in such moments he might possibly

¹ See also Nos. LXXXVIII., LXXXIX., XCI., CXV., CXVI., CXXI., CXXII.

have been heard to say what I myself have heard him say : "An Omnipotent Creator Who could make such a painful world is to me *sometimes* as hard to believe in as to believe in blind matter behind everything. The lavish profusion too in the natural world appals me, from the growths of the tropical forest to the capacity of man to multiply, the torrent of babies."

"I can almost understand some of the Gnostic heresies, which only after all put the difficulty one step further back" :

O me ! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond
And enter it, and make it beautiful ?¹

After one of these moods in the summer of 1892 he exclaimed : "Yet God *is* love, transcendent, all-pervading ! We do not get *this* faith from Nature or the world. If we look at Nature alone, full of perfection and imperfection, she tells us that God is disease, murder and rapine. We get this faith from ourselves, from what is highest within us, which recognizes that there is not one fruitless pang, just as there is not one lost good."

¹ He would sometimes put forward the old theory that "The world is part of an infinite plan, incomplete because it is a part. We cannot therefore read the riddle."

That which we dare invoke to bless ;
 Our dearest faith ; our ghastliest doubt ;
 He, They, One, All ; within, without ;
 The Power in darkness whom we guess ;

I found Him not in world or sun,
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,
 The petty cobwebs we have spun :

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
 I heard a voice “believe no more”
 And heard an ever-breaking shore
 That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the heart would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answer'd “I have felt.”

No, like a child in doubt and fear ;
 But that blind clamour made me wise ;
 Then was I as a child that cries,
 But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again
 What is, and no man understands ;
 And out of darkness came the hands
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

He had been reading the eighth chapter of
 Romans, and said that he thought that St.

Paul fully recognized in the sorrows of Nature and in the miseries of the world a stumbling-block to the divine idea of God, but that they are the preludes necessary as things are to the higher good.¹ "For myself," he said, "the world is the shadow of God," and then he referred to Jowett's commentary on this chapter :

As we turn from ourselves to the world around us, the prospect on which we cast our eyes seems to reflect the tone and colour of our own minds, and to share our joy and sorrow. To the religious mind it seems also to reflect our sins. We cannot indeed speak of the misery of the brute creation, of whose constitution we know so little ; nor do we pretend to discover in the loveliest spots of earth indications of a fallen world. But when we look at the vices and diseases of mankind, at the life of labour in which animals are our partners, at the aspect in modern times of our large towns, as in ancient, of a world given to idolatry, we see enough to explain the Apostle's meaning, and to understand how he could say that "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth till now." He is not speaking, of course, of the conscious feeling of degradation, but of the world, as it seemed to the eye of faith ; not as it appeared to itself, but as we may imagine it to appear in the sight of God when compared with the divine idea. . . . But the Spirit helps us, and God has chosen us according to His purpose, and in all things God is working with us for good.²

¹ Cf. St. John xvi. 21, 22.

² Jowett, *Epistle to the Romans*.

My father invariably believed that humility¹ is the only true attitude of the human soul, and therefore spoke with the greatest reserve of what he called “these unfathomable mysteries,” as befitting one who did not dogmatise, but who knew that the Finite can by no means grasp the Infinite: “Dark is the world to thee,² thyself is the reason why”; and yet, he had a profound trust that when all is seen face to face, all will be seen as the best. “Fear not thou the hidden purpose of that Power which alone is great.” “Who knows whether Revelation be not itself a veil to hide the Glory of that Love which we could not look upon, without marring the sight and our onward progress?”

This faith was to him the breath of life, and never, I feel, really failed him, or life itself would have failed.

Free-will and its relation to the meaning of human life and to circumstance was latterly one of his most common subjects of conversation. Free-will was undoubtedly, he said, the “main miracle, apparently an act of self-limitation by the Infinite, and yet a revelation by Himself of Himself.” “Take away the sense of individual

¹ “Almost the finest summing up of Religion is ‘to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.’”—A. T.

He often quoted Newton’s saying that we are like children picking up pebbles on the shore of the Infinite Ocean.

² The real mysteries to him were Time, life, and “finite-infinite” space: and so he talks of the soul “being born and banish’d into mystery.”

responsibility and men sink into pessimism and madness." He wrote at the end of the poem "Despair": "In my boyhood I came across the Calvinist Creed, and assuredly however unfathomable the mystery, if one cannot believe in the freedom of the human will as of the Divine, life is hardly worth having." The lines that he oftenest repeated about Free-will were,

This main miracle that thou art thou
With power on thine own act and on the world.

Then he would enlarge upon man's consequent moral obligations, upon the Law which claims a free obedience, and upon the pursuit of moral perfection (in imitation of the Divine) to which man is called.

*οὐ γὰρ ἔχω ἔγωγε οὐδὲν οὕτω μοι ἐναργὲς ὄν, ὥς τοῦτο,
τὸ εἶναι ὡς οἶόν τε μάλιστα καλόν τε καὶ ἀγαθόν.*

"For I hold nothing so clear as this, that I must be as good and noble as a man can be."

I cannot refrain from setting down the drift of his talk to a young man who was going to the University.—"If a man is merely to be a bundle of sensations, he had better not exist at all. He should embark on his career in the spirit of selfless and adventurous heroism; should develop his true self by not shirking responsibility, by casting aside all maudlin and introspective morbidities, and by using his powers cheerfully in accordance with the obvious dictates of his

moral consciousness, and so, as far as possible, in harmony with what he feels to be the Absolute Right.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by *law*,
Acting the law we live by without fear ;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.

It is motive, it is the great purpose which consecrates life.¹ The real test of a man is not what he knows, but what he is in himself and in his relation to others. For instance, can he battle against his own bad inherited instincts, or brave public opinion in the cause of truth? The love of God is the true basis of duty, truth, reverence, loyalty, love, virtue and work. I believe in these although I feel the emptiness and hollowness of much of life. ‘Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.’” Then he added characteristically : “But don’t be a prig. Most young men with anything in them make fools of themselves at some time or other.”

One of the last passages I heard him recite about Free-will was :

¹ St. Paul’s expression “The temple of the Holy Ghost” he thought had had a powerful effect on the Christian appreciation of the meaning of life.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of Heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

And he wrote for me as to man's will being free but only within certain limits : " Man's Free-will is but a bird in a cage ; he can stop at the lower perch, or he can mount to a higher. Then that which is and knows will enlarge his cage, give him a higher and a higher perch, and at last break off the top of his cage, and let him out to be one with the Free-will of the Universe." Then he said earnestly : " If the absorption into the divine in the after-life be the creed of some, let them at all events allow us many existences of individuality before this absorption ; since this short-lived individuality seems to be but too short a preparation for so mighty a union." ¹

Death's truer name
Is " Onward," no discordance in the roll
And march of that Eternal Harmony
Whereto the worlds beat time.

¹ " In Memoriam," No. XLVII.

In the same way, “O living will that shalt endure” he explained as that which we know as Free-will, the higher and enduring part of man. He held that there was an intimate connexion between the human and the divine, and that each individual will had a spiritual and eternal significance with relation to other individual wills as well as to the Supreme and Eternal Will.

Throughout his life he had a constant feeling of a spiritual harmony existing between ourselves and the outward visible Universe, and of the actual Immanence of God in the infinitesimal atom as in the vastest system.¹ “If God,” he would say, “were to withdraw Himself for one single instant from this Universe, everything would vanish into nothingness.” When speaking on that subject he said to me: “My most passionate desire is to have a clearer and fuller vision of God. The soul seems to me one with God, how I cannot tell. I can sympathize with God in my poor little way.” In some phases of thought and feeling his idealism tended more decidedly to mysticism. He wrote: “A kind of waking trance I have frequently had, quite up from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has generally come upon me thro’ repeating

¹ He would point out the difficulties of materialism, and would propound to us, when we were boys, the old puzzle: “Look at the mystery of a grain of sand; you can divide it for ever and for ever. You cannot conceive anything material of which you cannot conceive the half.” He disliked the Atomic theory: and was taken by the theory of *aboriginal centres of force*.

my own name two or three times to myself silently, till all at once, as it were out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction but the only true life.”¹ “This might,” he said, “be the state which St. Paul describes, ‘Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell.’”

He continued: “I am ashamed of my feeble description. Have I not said the state is utterly beyond words? But in a moment, when I come back to my normal state of ‘sanity,’ I am ready to fight for *mein liebes Ich*, and hold that it will last for æons of æons.”

In the same way he said that there might be a more intimate communion than we could dream of between the living and the dead, at all events for a time.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o’ershadow Thee,
Till God’s love set Thee at his side again !

¹ Cf. “The Ancient Sage,” and the smaller partial anticipation in “In Memoriam,” xcv. st. 9.

“Yet it appeared that he distinguished himself from external things.”—Jowett, MS. Note.

And—

The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that once was
Man,
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,
Are calling to each other thro' a dawn
Stranger than earth has ever seen ; the veil
Is rending, and the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.

I need not enlarge upon his faith in the Immortality of the Soul as he has dwelt upon that so fully in his poems.¹ "I can hardly understand," he said, "how any great, imaginative man, who has deeply lived, suffered, thought and wrought, can doubt of the Soul's continuous progress in the after-life." His poem of "Wages" he liked to quote on this subject.

He more than once said what he has expressed in "Vastness": "Hast Thou made all this for naught! Is all this trouble of life worth undergoing if we only end in our own corpse-coffins at last? If you allow a God, and God allows this strong instinct and universal yearning for another life, surely that is in a measure a presumption of its truth. We cannot give up the mighty hopes that make us men."

¹ He said to Bishop Lightfoot: "The cardinal point of Christianity is the Life after Death" (2 Tim. chap. i.).

My own dim life should teach me this,
 That life shall live for evermore,
 Else earth is darkness at the core,
 And dust and ashes all that is.
 What then were God to such as I ?

I have heard him even say that he "would rather know that he was to be lost eternally than not know that the whole human race was to live eternally"; and when he speaks of "faintly trusting the larger hope" he means by "the larger hope" that the whole human race would through, perhaps, ages of suffering, be at length purified and saved, even those who now "better not with time"; so that at the end of "The Vision of Sin" we read

God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

One day towards the end of his life he bade me look into the Revised Version and see how the Revisers had translated the passage "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." His disappointment was keen when he found that the translators had not altered "everlasting" into "æonian"¹ or some such word: for he never would believe that Christ could preach "everlasting punishment."

"Fecemi la divina potestate
 La somma sapienza, e 'l primo amore,"

¹ "Eternal" in R.V.

were words which he was fond of quoting in this relation, as if they were a kind of unconscious confession by Dante that Love must conquer at the last.

Letters were not unfrequently addressed to him asking what his opinions were about Evolution, about Prayer, and about Christ.

Of Evolution he said: “That makes no difference to me, even if the Darwinians did not, as they do, exaggerate Darwinism. To God all is present. He sees present, past, and future as one.”

To your question now
Which touches on the workman and his work.
“Let there be light and there was light” : ’tis so :
For was and is and will be are but is :
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light ; but we that are not all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,
And live perforce from thought to thought, and
make
One act a phantom of succession : thus
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow,
Time.

In the poem “By an Evolutionist,” written in 1888 when he was dangerously ill, he defined his position ; he conceived that the further science progressed, the more the Unity of Nature, and the purpose hidden behind the cosmic process of matter in motion and changing

forms of life, would be apparent. Some one asked him whether it was not hard to account for genius by Evolution. He put aside the question, for he believed that genius was the greatest mystery to itself.¹

To Tyndall he once said, "No evolutionist is able to explain the mind of Man or how any possible physiological change of tissue can produce conscious thought."² Yet he was inclined to think that the theory of Evolution caused the world to regard more clearly the "Life of Nature as a lower stage in the manifestation of a principle which is more fully manifested in the spiritual life of man, with the idea that in this process of Evolution the lower is to be regarded as a means to the higher."³

¹ "People," he once said, "do not consider that every human being is a vanful of human beings, of those who have gone before him, and of those who form part of his life."

² Cf. Tyndall's *Scientific Materialism*: "But the passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable, granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ, which would enable us to pass, by a process of reasoning, from the one to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why."

³ In a letter from the present Master of Balliol to me. And in "In Memoriam" he had written thus:

They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread
In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

In “Maud” he spoke of the making of man :
 As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe
 for his birth,
 So many a million of ages have gone to the
 making of man :
 He now is first, but is he the last ?

The answer he would give to this query
 was : “No, mankind is as yet on one of the
 lowest rungs of the ladder,¹ although every man
 has and has had from everlasting his true and
 perfect being in the Divine Consciousness.”

About prayer he said : “The reason why men
 find it hard to regard prayer in the same light
 in which it was formerly regarded is, that *we*
 seem to know more of the unchangeableness

Who throve and branch'd from clime to clime
 The herald of a higher race,
 And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more ;
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and show
 That life is not an idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears,
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast ;
 Move upward, working out the beast,
 And let the ape and tiger die.

¹ “The herald of a higher race.”

of Law : but I believe that God reveals Himself in each individual soul. Prayer is, to take a mundane simile, like opening a sluice between the great ocean and our little channels when the great sea gathers itself together and flows in at full tide."

"Prayer on our part is the highest aspiration of the soul."

A breath that fleets beyond this iron world
And touches Him who made it.

And

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with
Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than
hands and feet.

And

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.

He said that "O Thou Infinite, Amen," was the form of prayer which he himself used in the time of trouble and sorrow : and that it was better to suffer than to lose the power of suffering.

When questions were written to him about Christ, he would say to me : "Answer for me that I have given my belief in 'In Memoriam.'"¹

¹ "In Memoriam," xxxvi.

As the Master of Balliol wrote :

The “In Memoriam” records most of his inner nature. It was the higher and prevailing temper of his mind. He used to regard it as having said what he had to say on religion.

The main testimony to Christianity he found not in miracles but in that eternal witness, the revelation of what might be called “The Mind of God,” in the Christian morality, and its correlation with the divine in man.

He had a measureless admiration for the Sermon on the Mount ; and for the Parables—“perfection, beyond compare,” he called them. I heard a talk on these between him and Browning, and Browning fully agreed with my father in his admiration. Moreover my father expressed his conviction that “Christianity with its divine Morality but without the central figure of Christ, *the* Son of Man, would become cold,¹ and that it is fatal for religion to lose its warmth” ; that “*The* Son of Man” was the most tremendous title possible ; that the forms of Christian religion would alter ; but that the spirit of Christ would still grow from more to more “in the roll of the ages.”

Till each man find his own in all men’s good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood.

¹ “He did not preach His opinions ; He preached Himself.”—Renan’s *Vie de Jésus*. “The spiritual character of Christ,” my father would say, “is more wonderful than the greatest miracle.”

"This is one of my meanings," he said, "of

Ring in the Christ that is to be :

when Christianity without bigotry will triumph,
when the controversies of creeds shall have
vanished, and

Shall bear false witness, each of each, no more,
But find their limits by that larger light,
And overstep them, moving easily
Thro' after-ages in the Love of Truth,
The truth of Love."¹

"The most pathetic utterance in all history," he said, "is that of Christ on the Cross, 'It is finished,' after that passionate cry, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'" Nevertheless he also recognized the note of triumph in "It is finish'd."² "I am always amazed when I read the New Testament at the splendour of Christ's purity and holiness and at His infinite pity."³ He disliked discussion on the Nature of Christ, "seeing that such discussion was mostly unprofitable, for none knoweth the Son but the Father." "He went about doing good" he would say : and one of the traditional and unwritten sayings of Christ

¹ "Akbar's Dream."

² See *The Death of Enone, and other Poems*, p. 80. Westcott writes : "I always think that the tense ἐγκατέλειπες marks the crisis as past."

³ What he called "the man-woman" in Christ, the union of tenderness and strength.

which oftenest came home to him was, “He that is near Me is near the fire,” the baptism of the fire of inspiration. For in “In Memoriam” the soul, after grappling with anguish and darkness, doubt and death, emerges with the inspiration of a strong and steadfast faith in the Love of God for man, and in the oneness of man with God, and of man with man in Him—

That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.

I cannot end this chapter on “In Memoriam” more fitly than by quoting Henry Hallam’s letter on receiving in 1850 what he calls “the precious book.”

I know not how to express what I have felt. My first sentiment was surprise, for, though I now find that you had mentioned the intention to my daughter, Julia, she had never told me of the poems. I do not speak as another would to praise and admire: few of them indeed I have as yet been capable of reading, the grief they express is too much akin to that they revive. It is better than any monument which could be raised to the memory of my beloved son, it is a more lively and enduring testimony to his great virtues and talents that the world should know the friendship which existed between you, that posterity should associate his name with that of Alfred Tennyson.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE (1850-51)

Like perfect music unto noble words.

My father and mother had met in the spring of 1850 at Shiplake on the Thames ; where they had both stayed with the Drummond Rawnsleys, Mrs. Rawnsley being my mother's cousin.

If "In Memoriam" were published, Moxon had promised a small yearly royalty on this and on the other poems, and so my father had decided that he could now honourably offer my mother a home.

Accordingly after ten years of separation their engagement was renewed.

Early in those ten years my grandmother had suggested dividing her jointure with them, so that they might marry, but this, of course, they could not allow. Moxon now advanced £300—so my Uncle Charles told a friend,—at all events £300 were in my father's bank in his name ; and with this and their united small incomes, and all household furniture given them by my

mother's father, they decided that they could brave life together and that the marriage should take place at Shiplake on the 13th of June, the month which saw the publication of "In Memoriam."

Of the Vicarage with its terraced garden, and of the fine old church Miss Mitford gives the following picturesque description :

A few miles further, and a turn to the right conducts us to one of the grand old village churches, which give so much of character to English landscape. A large and beautiful pile it is. The tower, half clothed with ivy, stands with its charming vicarage and its pretty vicarage-garden on a high eminence, overhanging one of the finest bends of the great river. A woody lane leads from the church to the bottom of the chalk-cliff, one side of which stands out from the road below, like a promontory, surmounted by the laurel hedges and flowery cedar of Lebanon. This is Shiplake church, famed far and near for its magnificent oak carving, and the rich painted glass of its windows, collected, long before such adornments were fashionable, by the fine taste of the late vicar, and therefore filled with the very choicest specimens of mediæval art, chiefly obtained from the remains of the celebrated Abbey of St. Bertin near St. Omer, sacked during the first French Revolution. In this church Alfred Tennyson was married.

The wedding was of the quietest (even the cake and dresses arriving too late), which made my father say, to the amusement of those who were present, that it was "the nicest wedding" he had ever been at. In after-life he said :

"The peace of God came into my life before the altar when I wedded her."

The marriage party consisted of the bride's father,¹ Henry Sellwood, Edmund and Cecilia Lushington, Charles Weld, husband of Anne, one of the Sellwood sisters, and Mr. Greville Phillimore. The child bridesmaids were Mary and Margaret Rawnsley, and Jenny Elmhirst.

My uncle Charles and Louisa Tennyson Turner could not join the party, and my uncle wrote accordingly :

Oh what a queer world it is! I hope however it has done a brace of amiable and remarkable people some genuine good, whirligig as it is—this time at least. Well! The thing is to come off on the 13th, daddy says. Good wishes in crowds from me I despatch on dove's wing to you. I am going to keep pigeons, would they were carrier pigeons! then would I trouble them under their wings with missives of congratulation to arrive more swiftly than the railroad.

Coo! coo! coo! Your affectionate brother,

CHARLES.

My father made and repeated the following poem, as my mother and he drove from Ship-

¹ He was a stately, courteous gentleman, kindly, cultivated, unaffected, and above all a good friend. His family had come in old days from Somersetshire into Berkshire. He himself was a solicitor at Horncastle. Greatly to his honour he had taken up this profession when his family was on the road to ruin. In 1812 he had married Sarah Franklin, sister of the "heroic sailor" Sir John Franklin, but she had died in 1816, aged 28, leaving three daughters, Emily, Anne, and Louisa.

lake to Pangbourne ; enclosing it to Drummond Rawnsley through Mrs. Rawnsley.

MY DEAR KATE,

You managed it all very well yesterday.
Many thanks.

Ever yours, A. T.

P.S. Dubbie's¹ fees must be come at as he can best manage. The clerk and shirts are owing.

The poem would be more perfect without the third stanza, but I do not think you would like to miss it.

To the Vicar of Shiplake. (Unpublished)

Vicar of this pleasant spot

Where it was my chance to marry,
Happy, happy be your lot

In the Vicarage by the quarry.
You were he that knit the knot !

Sweetly, smoothly flow your life.

Never tithe unpaid perplex you,
Parish feud, or party strife,

All things please you, nothing vex you,
You have given me such a wife !

Live and prosper ! Day by day

Watch your standard roses blowing,
And your three young things at play,
And your triple terrace growing
Green and greener every May !

¹ Short for *Drummond*.

Sweetly flow your life with Kate's,
Glancing off from all things evil,
Smooth as Thames below your gates,
Thames along the silent level,
Streaming thro' his osier'd aits !

And let me say here—although, as a son, I cannot allow myself full utterance about her whom I loved as perfect mother and “very woman of very woman,”—“such a wife” and true helpmate she proved herself. It was she who became my father's adviser in literary matters ; “I am proud of her intellect,” he wrote. With her he always discussed what he was working at ; she transcribed his poems : to her and to no one else he referred for a final criticism before publishing. She, with her “tender, spiritual nature,”¹ and instinctive nobility of thought, was always by his side, a ready, cheerful, courageous, wise, and sympathetic counsellor. It was she who shielded his sensitive spirit from the annoyances and trials of life, answering (for example) the innumerable letters addressed to him from all parts of the world. By her quiet sense of humour, by her selfless devotion, by “her faith as clear as the heights of the June-blue heaven,” she helped him also to the utmost in the hours of his depression and of his sorrow ; and to her he wrote two of the most beautiful of his shorter

¹ My father's words.

lyrics, "Dear, near and true," and the dedicatory lines which prefaced his last volume, *The Death of Ænone*.

The day after the wedding they went to Weston-super-Mare, on their way to Clevedon. "It seemed a kind of consecration to go there." They saw Arthur Hallam's resting-place, and were received by Sir Abraham Elton in the beautiful old Manor House, Clevedon Court; and thence they went to Lynton. In that country, more solitary then than now, they enjoyed long rambles through the woods and over the heather and rode to the Valley of Rocks and Exmoor, in spite of "the weeping Devonshire climate."

Glastonbury, one of the reputed "island valleys of Avilion," followed: where they lunched in what had been the Refectory of the old Hospital for Pilgrims, built by an Abbot, John de Selwode, of the same name and race as my mother. This Abbot alone, as they were told, is buried beside the tomb of King Arthur, in the chancel of that famous Abbey,—once the wonder of the world, now but a few ruins in a garden. My father was greatly interested by the legend that Joseph of Arimathea came there in 63 A.D. and founded the first Christian colony in England:

From our old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,

And there the heathen prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build ;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore.

Clifton was the next halting-place ; thence they went to Bath, and on to Cheltenham to visit his mother. Many honeymoon houses were offered ; among others Brancepeth by his cousins, Fryston by R. M. Milnes, Tent Lodge, Coniston, by Mrs. James Marshall, a sister of my father's college friend, Stephen Spring Rice. They selected Tent Lodge, and set off for Patterdale and Ullswater, then to "the little villa on Coniston water." On their arrival my father writes to Mrs. Russell :

DEAREST AUNT,

Have you yet received the bound copy of "In Memoriam" which I purposed for you ? If not, will you or Emma drop me a line to this place, and I will take care that you have it immediately ? We have been making a little tour about these lakes, and have spent the last few days with my friends the Speddings at Bassenthwaite Water. We only arrived here last night. Mr. Marshall's park looked as lovely as the Garden of Eden, as we descended the hill to this place. We have a very beautiful view from our drawing-room windows, crag, mountain, woods and lake, which look especially fine as

the sun is dropping behind the hills. I wish you could see it. The Marshalls themselves are not here but expected daily. We found the seat of a Marshall on almost every lake we came to, for it seems there are several brothers who have all either bought or been left estates in this country ; and they are all, report says, as wealthy as Cræsus. I send you this little note just to tell you where we are, and how much your bounty has enabled us to enjoy ourselves among the mountains. We have been too on the whole fortunate in weather, tho' this climate has a bad name. I do not know whether you are at Cheltenham or Burwarton, but wherever you are, dearest aunt, God bless and preserve you from all ill. My wife desires her kindest love to you. . . . Good-bye.

Ever yours affectionately,

A. TENNYSON.

The drives and walks over the mountains, the boating on the lake among the water-lilies and by the islands where the herons built, he rowing, she steering, are noted in their diary.

Here for the first time my mother saw Carlyle, who was staying with the Marshalls. The meeting was characteristic ; he slowly scanned her from head to foot, then gave her a hearty shake of the hand. Next day he called at Tent Lodge ; and, hearing her cough, "with his invariable kindness" stole round, while the

others were talking, and shut the window which was open behind her.¹

One evening Mr. Venables and Mr. de Vere called. They talked for about an hour with my father—my mother having already retired to rest. At last, after puffing at his pipe for some moments in silence, my father spoke “like one thinking aloud”: “I have known many women who were excellent, one in one way, another in another way, but this woman is the noblest woman I have ever known.”² As Aubrey de Vere writes to me: “No friend who had then heard him could have felt any further anxiety as to his domestic happiness.”

The Marshalls offered my father and mother Tent Lodge as a permanent home, and the Ashburtons a house near Croydon, but these kind offers they thought it best to decline and went for a time to Park House, to find a residence of their own.

On November 19th my father was appointed Poet Laureate, owing chiefly to Prince Albert’s admiration for “In Memoriam.” Wordsworth had been now dead some months; and my father, as he has assured me, had not any expectation of the Laureateship, or any thought upon the

¹ Another story of his concern for others my father would tell. “Having heard that Henry Taylor was ill, Carlyle rushed off from London to Sheen with a bottle of medicine, which had done Mrs. Carlyle good, without in the least knowing what was ailing Henry Taylor, or for what the medicine was useful.”

² MS., Aubrey de Vere.

subject : it seemed to him therefore a very curious coincidence, that the night before the offer reached him he dreamt that Prince Albert came and kissed him on the cheek, and that he said in his dream, "Very kind, but very German."

In the morning this letter about the Laureateship was brought to his bedroom :

WINDSOR CASTLE, *Nov. 5th*, 1850.

By the death of the late lamented Wm. Wordsworth the Office of Poet Laureate to the Queen became at Her Majesty's disposal.

The ancient duties of this Office, which consisted in laudatory Odes to the Sovereign, have been long, as you are probably aware, in abeyance, and have never been called for during the Reign of Her present Majesty. The Queen however has been anxious that the Office should be maintained ; first on account of its antiquity, and secondly because it establishes a connection, through Her Household, between Her Majesty and the poets of this country as a body.

To make however the continuance of this Office in harmony with public opinion, the Queen feels that it is necessary that it should be limited to a name bearing such distinction in the literary world as to do credit to the appointment, and it was under this feeling, that Her Majesty in the first instance offered the appointment to Mr. Rogers, who stated to Her Majesty, in his reply, that the only reason which compelled him gratefully to decline Her Majesty's gracious intention, was, that his great age rendered him unfit to receive any new office.

It is under the same desire that the name of the

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poet appointed should adorn the Office, that I have received the commands of the Queen to offer this post to you, as a mark of Her Majesty's appreciation of your literary distinction.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

C. B. PHIPPS.

He took the whole day to consider and at the last wrote two letters, one accepting, one refusing, and determined to make up his mind after a consultation with his friends at dinner. He would joke and say, "In the end I accepted the honour, because during dinner Venables told me, that, if I became Poet Laureate, I should always when I dined out be offered the liver-wing of a fowl."

After accepting the Laureateship he writes to the Rev. T. H. Rawnsley :

MY DEAR RAWNSLEY,

You do ill to seem as though you blamed me for neglect and forgetfulness of you and yours ; you know it is not so, and can never be so, but I confess that in the matter of letter-writing I am in arrear to everybody. I have dozens of letters to write this afternoon, and I cannot help wishing that I could hire the electric telegraph once a month, and so work off my scores with the wires at whatever expense. This old-world, slow pen and ink operation is behind the age. . . . I thank you for your congratula-

tions touching the Laureateship. I was advised by my friends not to decline it * * *. I have no passion for courts, but a great love of privacy. . . . It is, I believe, scarce £100 a year, and my friend R. M. Milnes tells me that the price of the patent and court dress will swallow up all the first year's income. I have mislaid your letter, and so cannot tell whether you asked me any questions. Let me ask *you* one. I have been looking out for an unfurnished house, with good rooms, for £60 a year or thereabouts: do you know of any such near you? If you do, please communicate with me and I will come and see it. I expect an heir to nothing about next March or April. I suppose I must lay by the Laureate's hire for him as Southey did. Pray give my kindest love to Mrs. R. and my best remembrances to all friends, particularly G. Coltman, and

Believe me yours affectionately,
A. TENNYSON.

The immediate result of becoming Poet Laureate was that poems and letters poured in, and my father writes: "I get such shoals of poems that I am almost crazed with them; the two hundred million poets of Great Britain deluge me daily with poems: truly the Laureateship is no sinecure. If any good soul would just by way of a diversion send me a tome of prose!" In answer to an appeal from Moxon for a fresh

volume of new poems, he said, "We are correcting all the volumes for new editions."¹

My parents' first venture in the choice of a home was not encouraging. The house that they took was at Warninglid in Sussex, pleasant and sunny, with large airy rooms from which there was a Copley-Fielding-like view of the South Downs. "The full song of the birds delighted us as we drove up to the door," and the home seemed at first in every way suitable. But one night soon after their arrival a tremendous storm blew down part of the wall in their bedroom, and through the gap the wind raved and the water rushed. Then they learnt that their dining-room and bedroom had been a Roman Catholic Chapel, that a baby was buried somewhere on the premises, and later that one of a notorious gang of thieves and murderers known as "The Cuckfield Gang" had lived in their very lodge.

Besides they discovered that no postman came near the house, that the nearest doctor and butcher lived at Horsham, seven miles off; and that there was not even a carrier who passed

¹ In the *Keepsake* for 1851 were published :

What time I wasted youthful hours,
and

Come not when I am dead.

This last poem, "Edwin Morris," "The Eagle," and the Dedication "To the Queen," were included in the *Poems*, seventh edition, 1851.

anywhere within hail. Altogether everything was so uncanny and so uncomfortable, that they took a speedy departure, my father drawing my mother in a Bath chair over a very rough road to Cuckfield.

Finally, by the kind aid of Mrs. Henry Taylor, they took up their abode at Chapel House, Montpelier Row, Twickenham; a house which overlooked the parks of General Peel and of the Duc d'Aumale. It was entered through a square hall, and on the fine old staircase stood the carved figure of a mitred bishop "as if to bless the passers by."

On the 21st February their diary says: "We read *Alton Locke*, drove about in search of a Court dress for Levée, could not find one and had to give up Levée on the 26th. Rogers, hearing of this, offer'd his own dress, which had been also worn by Wordsworth and had been promised to the Wordsworth family as an heirloom. The coat did well enough, but about other parts of the dress there was some anxiety felt for the Levée on March 6th, as they had not been tried on."

He was meditating his first Laureate poem, "To the Queen," and was especially thinking of a stanza in which "the empire of Wordsworth should be asserted: for he was a representative Poet Laureate, such a poet as kings should honour, and such an one as would do honour to kings;—making the period of a reign

famous by the utterance of memorable words concerning that period." Spedding wrote to my father: "Those potentates stand highest in the estimation of succeeding ages, not who have been best praised in their own time, but who have in their own time done honour and given aid and encouragement to that which remains great and memorable in all time."

Later in March he stayed at Sir Alexander Duff Gordon's; and whilst there, at an evening party given by Lord John Russell, was introduced to Bunsen and to the Duke of Argyll. The Duke in after days and to the end of my father's life was one of his most valued friends.

On April 5th he received from Mr. Macready a letter of thanks for the sonnet addressed to him on leaving the stage.

Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part ;
Full-handed thunders often have confessed
Thy power, well used to move the public
breast.
We thank thee with our voice, and from the
heart.
Farewell, Macready, since this night we part,
Go, take thine honours home ; rank with
the best,
Garrick and statelier Kemble, and the rest,
Who made a nation purer thro' their art.
Thine is it that our drama did not die,
Nor flicker down to brainless pantomime,

And those gilt gauds men-children swarm to
see.

Farewell, Macready ; moral, grave, sublime ;
Our Shakespeare's bland and universal eye
Dwells pleased, thro' twice a hundred years, on
thee.

From W. G. Macready

SHERBORNE, DORSET, *April 4th*, 1851.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

If I had obeyed the impulse of my feelings, I should have written to you long since, when our friend Forster first communicated to me the kindness you had shown me in honouring my name with the glory of your verse. This was some days before the publication of your lines, and he may have told you that the emotion they excited in me was a manifestation of my grateful appreciation beyond what words can render you. You have indeed embalmed my perishable name, which will not so soon be lost in the long night, as "carens vate sacro," and I may truly assure you, of no testimony have I felt more proud, and on none have I reflected with more grateful pleasure, than on that which bears your name.

I remain, dear Mr. Tennyson,

Always and sincerely yours,

W. C. MACREADY.

On the 20th of April my parents' first child, a boy, was born, and, owing to my mother's having fallen down a step, died in the birth. At the time my father wrote :

"It was Easter Sunday and at his birth I heard the great roll of the organ, of the uplifted psalm (in the Chapel adjoining the house). . . . Dead as he was I felt proud of him. To-day when I write this down, the remembrance of it rather overcomes me; but I am glad that I have seen him, dear little nameless one that hast lived tho' thou hast never breathed, I, thy father, love thee and weep over thee, tho' thou hast no place in the Universe. Who knows? It may be that thou hast. . . . God's Will be done."

In the summer they met the Carlyles again. About this time he described my father to Sir J. Simeon as "sitting on a dung-heap among innumerable dead dogs." Carlyle meant that he was apt to brood over old-world subjects for his poems. Once many years after, when we called upon him, my father teased him about this utterance, and Carlyle replied, "Eh! that was not a very luminous description of you."

This was the year of the first great Exhibition, and what seems to have most delighted my father was the building itself and the great glass fountain.

On July 15th they left for Boulogne on their way to Italy. "The Daisy" gives the journey better than any prose of mine can give it. Jowett writes, "He always had a living vision of Italy, Greece and the Mediterranean." He was proud of the metre of "The Daisy" which

he called a far-off echo of the Horatian Alcaic.¹ Among the many metres he invented, this he ranked among his best, together with some of the anapæstic movements in "Maud," and the long-rolling rhythm of his "Ode to Virgil." On their journey he took with him his usual travelling companions, Shakespeare, Milton, Homer, Virgil, Horace, Pindar, Theocritus, and probably the *Divina Commedia* and Goethe's *Gedichte*.

Italy was in such a disturbed state that they did not go to Rome as they had intended. The fever was prevalent in Venice, so this had also to be given up. They stayed three weeks at the Baths of Lucca in the house of one Giorgio Basantino, opposite a wood where they would sit watching the green lizards at play. There were delightful evening drives over the mountains; and they rejoiced in "the glorious violet colouring of the Apennines, and the picturesqueness of the peasants beating out their flax or spinning with their distaffs at their cottage doors." Thence they journeyed to Florence to stay with my uncle Frederick at the Villa Torrigiani, which had been for many years his home. On September 24th they left Florence, returning by way of the "snowy Splügen" to

¹ He was pleased with the slightly different effect of (substantially) the same metre in the invitation "To the Rev. F. D. Maurice," gained by the dactyl which in those verses begins each fourth line (see p. 264).

Paris. Here the Brownings called on them at their hotel. Mr. Browning, already my father's friend, was affectionate as ever. Mrs. Browning was "fragile-looking, with great spirit eyes," and met my mother "as if she had been her own sister." Savile Morton came too, and the diary says: "His wild laugh sounded through the corridors. The Brownings gave us, before parting, two beautiful Paris nosegays (the flowers arranged in a sort of Grecian pattern) and both alike." On their return home to Chapel House, my father quotes Catullus as he enters the door:

"O, quid solutis est beatius curis!
 Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
 Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum,
 Desideratoque acquiescimus lecto.
 Hoc est, quod unum est pro laboribus tantis!"

Soon after he wrote the following letter to his old friends Mr. and Mrs. Brookfield, who were on their way to Madeira:

MY DEAR WILLIAM AND JANE,

I have only just got back to England and heard of you in calling on Mrs. Taylor at Mortlake. Grieved I was to hear so ill an account, that you are forced to leave England and that I may not see you again for a long time; yet I do not know why I should write except to tell you that my sympathies go with you and to wish that you, William, may soon

be better and that God's blessing may be with you on the winter seas, and in the fair island which I have so often longed to see. If my wife could stand the sea nothing would have pleased me better than to have accompanied you thither, but I hear that one friend at least has preceded you, and is there now, Stephen Spring Rice. That we may soon see you back in renewed health is the wish and prayer of

Yours affectionately,

A. TENNYSON.

Spedding was consulted as to some "National Songs for Englishmen" published in the *Examiner* in 1852, "since

Easy patrons of their kin
Have left the last free race with naked coasts."

He replies :

I will send £5 to Coventry Patmore for the Rifles, thinking that the more noise we make in that way the better, and the more we practise the less likely are we to be called upon to perform. I answered your summons to the Thatched House and found a room full of people not one of whom I knew ; all sufficiently zealous, and at the same time rational, and (so far as the preliminaries went) of one mind. I suppose they know one another, or some know some ; and as there seemed to be no want of volunteers for the Committee and Sub-committee to arrange details, I thought I might, without abandoning my country in her extremity, leave that part of the business to them and join some

club when it is organized. I think I could hit a Frenchman at 100 yards, if he did not frighten me.

Forster sent for me yesterday to look at the new poems, which I highly approve, and by no means allow of the objection suggested against the stanza.¹ America is our daughter but the men of America are our sons. Forster wants a name for the poet, which I think very desirable ; and no great matter what name is chosen so it be short and pronounceable, Alfred, Arthur, Merlin, Tyrtæus, Edward Ball, Britannicus, Honved, Hylax, anything. Amyntor would sound well, is not hackneyed, and is good Greek for defender or protector.

Your note though dated the 2nd did not arrive yesterday till I had gone out.

National Songs (1852)

When "Britons, guard your own," and "Hands all round" were written, my father along with many others regarded France under Napoleon as a serious menace to the peace of Europe. Although a passionate patriot, and a true lover of England, he was not blind to her faults, and was unprejudiced and cosmopolitan in seeing the best side of other nations ; and in later years after the Franco-German war, he was filled with admiration at the dignified way in which France was gradually gathering herself together. He rejoiced whenever England and France were in agreement, and worked together harmoniously for the good of the world.

¹ About America (p. 150).

Britons, guard your own

This version was given to my mother many years afterwards, so that she might publish it with her musical setting.

Rise, Britons, rise, if manhood be not dead ;
The world's last tempest darkens overhead :

All freedom vanish'd—

The true men banish'd—

He triumphs ! maybe we shall stand alone !

Britons, guard your own.

Call home your ships across Biscayan tides,
To blow the battle from their oaken sides.

Why waste they yonder

Their idle thunder ?

Why stay they there to guard a foreign throne ?

Seamen, guard your own.

We were the best of marksmen long ago,
We won old battles with our strength, the bow.

Now practise, yeomen,

Like those bowmen,

Till your balls fly as their true shafts have flown,

Yeomen, guard your own.

Should they land here and but one hour prevail,
There must no man go back to bear the tale ;

No man to bear it,

Swear it ! We swear it !

Although we fought the banded world alone,

We swear to guard our own.

*Hands all round !*¹

First drink a health, this solemn night,

A health to England, every guest ;

That man's the best cosmopolite,

Who loves his native country best.

May Freedom's oak for ever live

With stronger life from day to day ;

That man's the true Conservative

Who lops the moulder'd branch away.

Hands all round !

God the tyrant's hope confound !

To this great cause of Freedom drink, my friends,

And the great name of England round and round.

A health to Europe's honest men !

Heaven guard them from her tyrants' jails !

From wrong'd Poerio's noisome den,

From iron'd limbs and tortured nails !

We curse the crimes of southern kings,

The Russian whips and Austrian rods,

We, likewise, have our evil things ;

Too much we make our Ledgers Gods,

Yet hands all round !

God the tyrant's cause confound !

To Europe's better health we drink, my friends,

And the great name of England round and round.

¹ Feb. 9th, 1852. I must send you what Landor says in a note this morning : “ ‘ Hands all round ! ’ is incomparably the best (convivial) lyric in the language, though Dryden's ‘ Drinking Song ’ is fine.”

JOHN FORSTER TO MRS. TENNYSON.

What health to France, if France be she,

Whom martial prowess only charms ?

Yet tell her—Better to be free

Than vanquish all the world in arms.

Her frantic city's flashing heats

But fire to blast the hopes of men.

Why change the titles of your streets ?

You fools, you'll want them all again.

Yet hands all round !

God the tyrant's cause confound !

To France, the wiser France, we drink, my
friends,

And the great name of England round and round.

Gigantic daughter of the West,

We drink to thee across the flood,

We know thee most, we love thee best,

For art thou not of British blood ?

Should war's mad blast again be blown,

Permit not thou the tyrant powers

To fight thy mother here alone,

But let thy broadsides roar with ours.

Hands all round !

God the tyrant's cause confound !

To our great kinsmen of the West, my friends,

And the great name of England round and round.

O rise, our strong Atlantic sons,

When war against our freedom springs !

O speak to Europe thro' your guns !

They *can* be understood by kings.

You must not mix our Queen with those

That wish to keep their people fools ;

Our freedom's foemen are her foes,

She comprehends the race she rules.

Hands all round !

God the tyrant's cause confound !

To our great kinsmen of the West, my friends,

And the great cause of freedom round and
round.¹

¹ “The third of February, 1852,” is not printed here because it was included in the *Poems* (ed. 1872). Other contributions appeared in the *Examiner*, but my father did not think them good enough to be reprinted.

CHAPTER VI

CHELTENHAM AND WHITBY (1852)

*My father's letter-diary*¹

CHELTENHAM, Jan. 18th, 1852.

ALAN KER has taken four copies of my Ode "My Lords" to send to papers here and there. Mother was delighted beyond measure to see me, making me remorseful that I had not been here before. Alan and Mary seem well and hopeful: they say it is only a fortnight's steam to Jamaica (where he is appointed a judge), and they will not take a large outfit because at any time they can have things from England. Dobson says we could live here much better and cheaper than at Twickenham. I find the air much fresher.

¹ This he habitually wrote to my mother when absent from home.

(*Apparently answering a query as to
Count D'Orsay*)¹

Jan. 1852.

Count D'Orsay is a friend of mine, co-godfather to Dickens' child with me. He is Louis Napoleon's intimate friend and secretary, and moreover I am told a man who has wept over my poems. See how strangely things are connected. Just put the things together. Wonderful are these times, and no one knows what may arise from the smallest things. I the poet of England with the secretary of Louis Napoleon whom I have abused.

CHELTENHAM, Jan. 22nd.

A note from Charles Weld this morning. He sent my poem to the *Times*, but the *Times* ignores it. Alan Ker says it is not their custom to put in poems except they are allowed to subscribe the author's name. I have told him to try the *Morning Chronicle*: he seems for *Fraser*, tho' it is so long before *Fraser* comes out that my poem will be half superannuated

¹ My father said that before this he had dined with Count D'Orsay and other friends at John Forster's. The Count was a glorious, handsome fellow, generally dressed in tight-fitting blue coat with gilt buttons. So carried away by D'Orsay's splendour was Forster that he was heard shouting out above the hubbub of voices to his servant Henry: "Good heavens, sir, butter for the Count's flounders!"

like the musket. I see that here and there people are really beginning to be awake to their danger * * *. In this horrible age of blab I can scarce trust aright.

Jan. 23rd.

I have been out every day dining. The readers of the *Examiner* will no doubt guess the authorship from knowing Forster's friendship for me. The military letters in the *Times* are very interesting. The hills here have fine lights on them as seen from my windows. John Rashdall wants us to go and spend three weeks with him at Malvern.

YORK, July 7th, 1852.

Slept at Spedding's where I found they expected me. Started this morning 11 a.m. Hay fever atrocious with irritation of railway, nearly drove me crazed, but could not complain, the other only occupant of the carriage having a curiously split shoe for his better ease, and his eyes and teeth in a glare at me with pain of gout the whole way, and finally helped out by his servant, going to drink Harrogate waters. Came here to the Black Swan, ordered dinner, went out and bought weed, having left mine at Spedding's with gloves (ay me!). Enquired of tobacconist state of parties here, "Never was anything so satisfactory, all purity of Election, no row, no drunkenness, Mr. Vincent will come

in without any bother." While he was yet speaking arose a row, innumerable mob raging, housekeepers all down the street rushed out with window-shutters to prevent windows being broken. My dinner waiting for me, I having to plunge thro' mob to get at it, essayed the fringes of the crowd, very dense nucleus of enormous brawl somewhere within. Presently the glazed hats of policemen, like sunshine striking here and there at the breaking up of a storm, showed me an issue of hope. I plunged through in the wake of the blue coats and got home. To-morrow to Whitby. Vincent after all not returned. When I got to Waterloo the roses had snapt off short and lay at the bottom of the carriage. The porter opened the door, picked up one, snuffed at it with vast satisfaction, and never so much as "by your leave."

5 NORTH TERRACE, WEST CLIFF, WHITBY,
July 8th, 1852.

I am set down here for a week at least in lodgings. It is rather a fine place, a river running into the sea between precipices, on one side new buildings and a very handsome royal hotel belonging to Hudson the railway king, on the other at the very top a gaunt old Abbey, and older parish Church hanging over the town amid hundreds of white gravestones that looked to my eye something like clothes laid out to

dry. Moreover there is the crackiness of an election going on and lots of pink and blue flags, and insane northland boatmen of Danish breed, who meet and bang each other for the love of liberty, foolish fellows. In the midst of the row yesterday came a funeral followed by weeping mourners, a great hearse, plumes nodding and mourning coach, and the gaunt old Abbey looked down with its hollow eyes on the life and death, the drunkenness and the political fury, rather ironically as it seemed to me, only that it was too old to have much feeling left about anything. No bathing men were to be had, so I e'en walked into the sea by myself and had a very decent bathe. Hay fever was much better yesterday and is bad again this morning. I could not write yesterday for I came in after the post had started by a very pretty rail which curves like a common road between great wolds, the Esk, which is the stream that debouches here, running below. Then we really went down a considerable hill with a rope. The same thing I think occurs at Liége, but this seemed to me much steeper. I am told there are very fine views in the neighbourhood, though most probably I shall not get out far enough to see them as it is pestilent hot.

WHITBY, *July 13th.*

I want to go to Redcliffe Scar which old Wordsworth once told me of, or perhaps to

Bolton Abbey. I think it a great pity that your "Sweet and low" hadn't the start of all these musical jottings. I have had two very good days' coasting, I mean walking along on and under the cliffs. Very singular they are with great bivalve shells sticking out of them. They are made of a great dark slate-coloured shale (is it to be called?) that comes showering down ever and anon from a great height; and on the hard flat rock which makes the beach on one side of the town (for on the other side are sands), you see beautiful little ammonites which you stoop to pick up but find them part of the solid rock. You know these are the snakes which St. Hilda drove over the cliff and falling they lost their heads, and she changed them into stone. I found a strange fish on the shore with rainbows about its wild staring eyes, enclosed in a sort of sack with long tentacula beautifully coloured, quite dead, but when I took it up by the tail it spotted all the sand underneath with great drops of ink, so I suppose it was a kind of cuttle-fish. I found too a pale pink orchis on the sea bank and a pink vetch, a low sort of shrub with here and there a thorn. I am reading lots of novels. The worst is they do not last longer than the day. I am such a fierce reader I think I have had pretty well my quantum suff.: Venables' anecdotes are very interesting indeed. One cannot help wishing that such a man as Gladstone may come to sit on the top branch of the tree.

WHITBY, *July 19th.*

I have ordered a carriage and am going to see Lord Normanby's park near here, tho' I am half afraid of it, a carriage so excites my hay fever. I met an old smuggler on the coast yesterday who had been in Lord N.'s service (not as smuggler of course!), and he took me for Lord Normanby at first, a likeness I have been told of more than once before. I got into conversation with him and I am going to call for him to-day and he is to show me the caves and holes in the coast where they used to land their kegs. I am going from here to-morrow, I think I shall go by the Scarboro' packet but I am not certain. I shall most likely pop down on Charles at Grasby, but if I go to Scarboro' I hardly think I shall go out of my way again to Leeds. I shall like much to see the Brownings again, Mrs. B. particularly. I suppose when I come back the Lushingtons will want me to spend some days at Park House. I have seen no houses here to be sold, but then I have not looked out for them. A tailor who sewed me on some buttons, told me Whitby was remarkable for longevity, the healthiest place in England except some place (he said) near Cheltenham, he had forgotten the name. I dare say he meant Malvern.

GRASBY, *July 22nd.*

I came by the packet boat to Scarborough where I stopt the night and came on here yesterday. The train only stopt at Moortown, and I was obliged to walk through the fields to Grasby, when I admired the deep long-stemmed Lincolnshire wheat which I had not seen for many a day.

I find Charles and Louisa very well, only Charles rather low as it seems to me. It is a nice little place they have and the country really looks pretty at this time of year. I shall stop a few days.

GRASBY, *July 27th.*

Pray take drives every day. The school-children have a feast here to-morrow for which I am going to stay. They run in sacks and do all manner of queer things. Our parson-party went off well. Agnes I suppose will be triumphant to-morrow. I think when I leave here I shall go round by Grimsby to see the new docks and perhaps get a bathe at Cleethorpes.

We went over to drink tea the other afternoon with Mr. Maclean, the Vicar of Caistor, where I made fun for the children, and saw a young cuckoo which a boy had found in a sparrow's nest, a rather rare circumstance so late in July; but the boy had had him for three weeks and fed him with worms. He was a good deal

duskier than the adult cuckoo, and with a white band on his head and very voracious, would have swallowed anything.

HULL, *July 31st.*

I am going out of the way to see Crowland Abbey and maybe shall stop a day or so there. I write this in vast haste at the Mason Arms, Louth. Daddy¹ drove me over last night to Grimsby to see the new dock, truly a great work.

When he reached home, Monckton Milnes asked him to dinner. He wrote :

MY DEAR MILNES,

I have never dined in town (except once with Hallam en famille when I met him by chance in Lear the painter's rooms looking at his picture of the Syracusan Quarries,² and once or twice with my brother-in-law en famille also) since I dined with you, Heaven knows how long ago, and met Doyle and others. I have given up dining out and am about to retire into utter solitude in some country house, but if you feel aggrieved at sending one invitation after another to me, unaccepted, I will come. You have not mentioned your hour 6 ? 7 ? 8 ? let me know. Do not bother yourself about

¹ Henry Sellwood.

² Now in the drawing-room at Farringford.

giving me a bed, I can get one (and my own way too in the matter of smoke) better at Spedding's. Really I am very unwell and, tho' hay fever sometimes lets me alone for a whole day together, yet it sometimes makes me quite unfit to sit at table. Send me a line to say what your hour is and what Maurice's hour is and I will see if I can come in time for Maurice.

Ever yours,
A. TENNYSON.

To James Spedding

DEAR J. S.

Can you let me have your attic next Saturday night and Sunday? I am going to dine with Milnes on Sunday, he has offered me a bed but I am more at mine ease in mine inn (smoking-room I should say) with you.

* * * * *

Go and see (and having seen, if you can interest yourself in) Thomas Woolner's design for the W. W.¹ Westminster monument. I am told it is good and I promised to say a good word for him.

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.

¹ Wordsworth, now in the drawing-room at Farringford.

CHAPTER VII

TWICKENHAM (1852-53)

IN February, 1852, a report reached my father that Tom Moore was dying. A friend writes : "This darling old poet is only just alive, mind and body. X. goes over frequently to see him and read him your poems, which he cries over and delights in."

Early in the year my father and mother paid a visit to one of his old College friends, Mr. Rashdall the clergyman of Malvern, and met the Carlyles and Sydney Dobell.¹ Rashdall was a man so beloved by his parishioners, and so simple and direct in his language from the pulpit, that he had emptied the Dissenting Chapels for miles round. He would often hold his Church services in the fields. A flowery record of Spring follows in my mother's journal, about the beauty of the daffodils, wood anemones,

¹ Mr. Briton Rivière writes to me : "I asked my brother-in-law, Sydney Dobell, to describe your father to me, and he said : 'If he were pointed out to you as the man who had written the *Iliad*, you would answer, "I can well believe it."'"

primroses, and violets ; the pear trees throughout the country in bloom "like springing and falling fountains." While they were there my father read Dr. Wordsworth's *Apocalypse* to my mother. On their return to Twickenham, he visited the Exhibition, and was delighted with Millais' "Ophelia" and "The Huguenot," but liked "The Huguenot" much the best. They came to know the Peels at Marble Hill, and Archibald Peel (the General's son) pointed out the avenue in which Sir Walter Scott placed the interview between Jeanie Deans and Queen Caroline. Happy days were spent in the little Twickenham garden, my father reading aloud passages of any book which struck him. Layard's *Nineveh* and Herschel's *Astronomy* were read at this time. Numerous friends called from London : Spedding, Venables, Patmore, Edmund and Franklin Lushington, Temple, Palgrave, Jowett, the Welds and others. He writes, "lots of callers, I expect I shall be inundated." The Diary continues, "Hallam born on the 11th of August."

To John Forster

August 11th, 1852.

MY DEAR JOHN FORSTER,

I did not tell you of my marriage which you took rather in dudgeon. Now I will tell you of the birth of a little son this

day. I have seen beautiful things in my life, but I never saw anything more beautiful than the mother's face as she lay by the young child an hour or two after, or heard anything sweeter than the little lamblike bleat of the young one. I had fancied that children after birth had been all shriek and roar; but he gave out a little note of satisfaction every now and then, as he lay by his mother, which was the most pathetic sound in its helplessness I ever listened to. You see I talk almost like a bachelor, yet unused to these things: but you—I don't hear good reports of you. You should have been better by this. Get better quickly if you would have me be as I always am

Yours most truly, A. TENNYSON.

MY DEAR JOHN FORSTER,

I have only time for one word of bulletin. Everything, I believe, is going on well, tho' the mother suffers from an almost total want of sleep, and the little monster does anything but what Hamlet says Osric did in his nursery-days. I found him lying alone on the third day of his life, and, while I was looking at him, I saw him looking at me with such apparently earnest, wide-open eyes, I felt as awe-struck as if I had seen a spirit. I hope you are mending.

God bless you, A. TENNYSON.

To Mrs. Browning

CHAPEL HOUSE, TWICKENHAM,
August 11th, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. BROWNING,

I wrote to you once before this morning. I now write again to tell you what I am sure your woman's and poet's heart will rejoice in, that my wife was delivered of a fine boy at 9.30 a.m. this day, and that both she and the child are doing well. I never saw any face so radiant with all high and sweet expression as hers when I saw her some time after.

Ever yours truly, A. TENNYSON.

Mrs. Browning's reply was the first congratulatory letter.

58 WELBECK STREET,
Wednesday night,
August 12th, 1852.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

Thank you and congratulate you indeed from my heart. May God bless you all three.

Robert said, when I was writing the note of enquiry which has gone to the post, "Tell him we will hope still for a joyful meeting," but I had not courage at that moment of crisis to mention a word of "joy."

Now I may, thank God. Will you say to dear Mrs. Tennyson when she is able to think of anything so far off as a friend, how deeply I sympathise in her happiness, with the memory of all that ecstasy as I felt it myself, still thrilling through me?

And there are barbarians in the world who dare to call the new little creatures not pretty, ugly even!!

Will you after a day or two send me a "line of bulletin"? See how I encroach upon your kindness!

Most truly yours,

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

P.S. by Robert Browning.

I can't help saying too, how happy I am in your happiness and in the assurance that it is greater than even you can quite know yet. God bless, dear Tennyson, you and all yours.

R. B.

Saturday.

MY DEAR MRS. BROWNING,

Here is one word of bulletin as you desired.

All is doing as well as can be.

To this one word, let me add another, that is how very grateful your little note and Browning's epilogue made me. I began to read it to my wife but could not get on with it, so I put it away by her bedside, and she shall read it as soon as she reads anything.

Ever yours and your husband's,

A. TENNYSON.

"From the first," my mother writes, "Alfred watched Hallam with interest; some of his acquaintances would have smiled to see him racing up and down stairs and dandling the baby in his arms." The poem "Out of the Deep"

was begun then and finished long afterwards. The christening was at Twickenham, the god-fathers being Henry Hallam and F. D. Maurice.

From Henry Hallam

WILTON CRESCENT, *August 25th, 1852.*

MY DEAR ALFRED TENNYSON,

I returned from a three weeks' tour in France late last night. Of your paternal dignity, lately accrued, I had had no information. This is my excuse for delay in acknowledging your letters of the 16th and in expressing at once my sincere congratulations on the event, and my most willing acceptance of the office which you desire me to undertake. That the names of Hallam and Tennyson should be united in the person of this infant will be to me a gratifying reflection for the remainder of my days. You have already made those names indissoluble. I beg you to give my kind regards to Mrs. A. Tennyson. My daughter is at her own house at Hayes in Kent; I shall soon go down.

Yours most truly, H. HALLAM.

From Rev. F. D. Maurice

BODINGTON RECTORY, nr. SHREWSBURY,
August 30th, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am almost ashamed to confess the pleasure which your note of this morning caused me. It does not look like the proper feeling of responsibility of the office with which the kindness of Mrs. Tennyson and

you would invest me, to have experienced such delight, and I am afraid you will think very differently and much more truly of my Christianity when you hear of it. But I have so very much to thank you for, especially of late years since I have known your poetry better and I hope I have been somewhat more in a condition to learn from it, that I cannot say how thankful I feel to you for wishing that I should stand in any nearer and more personal relation to you. I beg you to express to Mrs. Tennyson how very much I value this proof of her confidence and how much I hope I may not prove utterly unworthy of it.

Very truly yours, F. D. MAURICE.

From Mrs. Browning

58 WELBECK STREET, *Sept.* 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

It is delightful always to have kind words most delightful to have them from *you*.

We had resolved on leaving England on the fifth, but you offer us an irresistible motive for staying, in spite of fogs and cold. So you will see us on Tuesday, and we shall come in time for the ceremony : we would not miss the christening for the world.

And I must tell you, a baby has screamed in this house ever since we have been in England, much to my sympathy . . . only, as the child grows fatter and fatter I have come to consider the screaming to be a sign of prosperity. Still, it is very painful to hear a young child : when he cried I was always near crying myself. Only the fact is that these little creatures *will* make much ado about nothing sometimes, and we are wrong in reading their ills too large through our

CONGRATULATIONS

imagination. I hope to find your darling well and serene on Tuesday, and yourself stronger than you seem to be now.

Let me be (why not?)

Affectionately yours always,

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

From Charles Dickens

DOVER, 1st Oct. 1852.

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

I have received your note here only to-day. It would have given me the heartiest pleasure to have welcomed a young Tennyson to this breathing world wherein he is much wanted, on so good an occasion as his christening, but that I have engaged to go to Boulogne on Sunday for a fortnight. I shall drink his health on the fifth.

As your letter bears no address and as I cannot call your address to mind, I send this to Moxon's care.

Ever yours, CHARLES DICKENS.

From Frederick Tennyson

VILLA TORRIGIANI, 1852.

Having duly received the bulletins announcing an autumnal shoot of the old Laurel in the shape of Hallam Tennyson (is this his only name?) I write not only to wish you joy of your new acquisition but to have more particulars from you on that all engrossing subject. Is he to turn out a dove or an eagle? Has he a hawking eye and the aquiline supremacy of the Cæsars in his nose or is there a classical type of head, a Belvederino with strong ideality? Will the pencils of

the rays of the ancestral Intellectualities converge into a focus in the concavity of his cranium and be reflected therefrom in redoubled warmth and light, or will they neutralize one another and become common sense, a very good thing? You will probably be better enabled to answer these questions some ten years hence than now, but it is astonishing how early children begin to exhibit distinctive qualities. In my three little girls I fancy I detect strong marks of Individualities.

Your affectionate brother, F. T.

There was some question as to the name, whether it should be Arthur or Hallam. My father called out in a clear voice, that rang through the church, "Hallam," which pleased Henry Hallam, though jokingly he said in London: "They would not name him Alfred lest he should turn out a fool, and so they named him 'Hallam.'" Thinking that in future it would be an interesting link with a former age,¹ his parents took him with them to old Samuel Rogers, and Rogers, bowing to my mother, said in his courtly and diplomatic way, "Mrs. Tennyson, I made one great mistake in my life, I never married."

In November was the burial of the Duke of Wellington. The Ode was published on the morning of the funeral.²

¹ Rogers, my father told me, had had his hand on Dr. Johnson's knocker, but was too shy to knock and had run away without seeing the great man.

² The Ode was written in the "Green Room," Chapel House, Twickenham.

My father wrote: *Nov. 18th.* "Have seen the procession at the Duke of Wellington's funeral: very fine; hope to see the interior of St. Paul's before I leave." To Edward Fitzgerald he observed: "At the funeral I was struck with the look of sober manhood in the British soldier." "In the midst of the solemn silence," said my father, "Magdalene Brookfield whispered to her mother when she saw the Duke's boots carried by his charger, 'Mama, when I am dead shall I be that?' meaning the boots."

It is interesting to note that while the Ode was being abused in all directions by the Press my father wrote thus to his publishers: "If you lose by the Ode, I will not consent to accept the whole sum of £200, which you offered me. I consider it quite a sufficient loss if you do not gain by it."

Henry Taylor wrote:

MORTLAKE, *Nov. 17th, 1852.*

I have read your ode ("Death of the Duke of Wellington"), and I believe that many thousands at present, and that many hundreds of thousands in future times, will feel about it as I do, or with a yet stronger and deeper feeling; and I am sure that every one will feel about it according to his capacity of feeling what is great and true. It has a greatness worthy of its theme and an absolute simplicity and truth, with all the poetic passion of your nature moving beneath.

And here is my father's reply :

SEAFORD HOUSE, SEAFORD,
Nov. 23rd, 1852.

Thanks, thanks ! I have just returned from Reading and found your letter. In the all but universal depreciation of my ode by the Press, the prompt and hearty appreciation of it by a man as true as the Duke himself is doubly grateful.

Ever, my dear Taylor, yours,
A. TENNYSON.

This autumn the Twickenham meadows were so much flooded that my father and mother moved to Seaford, Brighton and Farnham. At the last place Charles Kingsley came to see them, fresh and vivacious as ever.

At the beginning of next year (1853) my father was asked whether he would allow himself to be nominated as Rector of the University of Edinburgh. He replied :

To Appleby Stephenson, M.D.

LONDON, *March 1st*, 1853.

SIR,

Your letter of the twenty-fourth of February has reached me only this morning. I trust that yourself and those other gentlemen, whom you speak of as being willing to give their

vote for me as President of your University, will forgive me when I say that however gratefully sensible of the honour intended me, I must beg leave with many thanks to decline it. I could neither undertake to come to Edinboro' nor to deliver an inaugural address at the time specified. You will doubtless find another and worthier than myself to fill this office.

I am, Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,
A. TENNYSON.

My father then went off house-hunting and wrote from Farnham to my mother :

FARNHAM.

"I saw Elstead Lodge yesterday, dry soil but quite flat, with view of distant hills, and one hill very near : splendid lawn but house looking north. The park here is delicious and the little house to be sold has a large garden. . . . As for the house, you would find the rooms too low. If I buy, there is plenty of room for building two good additional rooms. I saw the lawyer here and he has given me the refusal. It is quite retired, just under the Bishop's palace. What an air after Twickenham ! I walked over to Hale and looked into the old premises."¹

In the summer my father and mother took

¹ Where my grandfather, Henry Sellwood, lived with my mother after leaving Horncastle.

a tour to York,¹ Whitby, Redcar, Richmond and Grasby. He left her at Richmond to return to Grasby, and went with Palgrave to Glasgow. From Glasgow the change was very pleasant when the travellers found themselves at Carstairs, the home of my father's old college friend, Robert Monteith, and at the Sellars' on the Sound of Mull.

Mrs. Sellar has written for me the following account of the visit to Ardtornish :

We were living in the summer of 1853 at Ardtornish, on the Sound of Mull, the scene of the opening canto of the "Lord of the Isles," when my husband heard from his friend, Mr. Palgrave, that he and Mr. Tennyson were travelling in Scotland on their way to Skye, and would, if convenient, stop with us for two or three days. A cousin of mine, Miss Cross, one of the most charming and brilliant women I have ever known, was staying with us at the time, and to her, as well as to us, the thought of "Tennyson," the man we counted half divine, being our guest, was the realisation of a dream; and I don't think anything *has* happened in after-life that has left a more lasting or delightful impression.

Your father arrived on a Saturday (in August) and stayed till the following Wednesday afternoon. No

¹ My father wrote from Tait's Hotel, July 29th, 1853: "A Roman epitaph in the Museum at York touched me :

D. M. Simpliciae Florentine
Anime innocentissime
Que vixit menses decem.
Felicis Simplex Pater Fecit.
Leg. vi. v."

one could have been more easy, simple and delightful, and, as we had then no neighbour, once he had faced us, there was no further social trial awaiting him! and he blossomed out in the most genial manner, making us all feel as if he were an old friend. He went to church at Morven with us next day, a poor little church on a windy hill, overlooking the Sound of Mull—having for its “minister” the well-known Dr. John Macleod, called, from his great height, the High Priest of Morven—and its one distinction, a beautiful Iona cross brought from the island of Inch Colme centuries ago. Mr. Tennyson was much struck by Dr. Macleod (“such a well-formed head,” he exclaimed), and asked us if we did not have our clergyman to dinner? We did not, as a rule, the distance was too great, but we felt sure he would be delighted to meet Mr. Tennyson, and accordingly he came and they sat up far into the night; the one recounting the legends and tales of the country, and his hair-breadth escapes by flood and field—and the other, to the delight of his audience, sometimes reading his own poems or recalling his own experiences. The weather was fine, and the next day we started soon after breakfast for a long walk on the moors, ending at a waterfall that fell over a cliff, hollowed out, under which we were able to creep, and we sat with the water falling before us like a silver veil. Mr. Tennyson said it was a great pity we had not brought food with us, and so need not have hurried home, and then, almost immediately, he chanted:—

“ We had smoke, but we had na wine
And we had nothing whereon to dine,
But there was Dennistoun’s daughter,
And Crosskin sang a song of mine
Behind the falling water.”

All the way going home he was making the most absurd nonsense-ballad-verses, generally in Scotch, but so rapidly, and so inconsecutive were they, that it was impossible to remember much of them, even at the time, and now only two verses remain in my memory.

They found her buried in the moor,
Shut out from every hope,
And her bonny little noseling
Was as brown as Windsor soap !

There came a cobbler to the toun,
And he was ane o' the clippers,
And he took the skin of her brown bodie
And made it into slippers.

In the evening he read to us, and no one who heard him could ever forget his reading of the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington"; to this day, I never read it without hearing his voice. "In Memoriam" was on the table and he said, "I shan't read this," it happened to be open at "Calm is the Morn," and on my remarking that it was an especial favourite of mine, he turned round quickly and demanded "*Why?*" Rather a staggering question for one not apt at giving a reason for the faith in her! With trembling lips I replied that for one thing the words followed the sense in so marvellous a manner, and with this feeble reply he was kind enough to seem content. The next day we drove and walked up the Glen, and I can see him as distinctly as if it were yesterday sitting by the clear brown river beside a beautiful avenue of lime trees, planted by a cousin of Flora Macdonald's, and repeating "Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon," saying, no more simple or beautiful love song had ever been written.

He also repeated *à propos* of a branch he was leaning against, breaking :

“ I léant my back against an aik
And thocht it was a trusty tree,
But syne it bent, and then it break,
And sae did my false love wi’ me.”

Both these poems were, naturally, well known to us, but it seemed as if we heard them for the first time, so wonderfully did his voice bring out the melody, the meaning and above all the pathos. He had given up the idea of going to Skye, and this gained for us another day’s visit, which he embodied in the following verse :

If he did not see Loch Coruisk,
He ought to be forgiven,
For though he miss’d a day in Skye
He spent a day in Heaven !

To my husband he repeated several verses of, then, unpublished poems, but begged him never to repeat them, enforcing this later, in a letter from Farringford—“ Don’t quote any lines you may remember of mine. F. P. has been doing so, and they have travelled down to Pau, and might as well have gone to pot, for I have before this, seen lines of mine printed with a little alteration in verse books of others, not, I daresay, dishonestly—an author may not know when a verse buzzes in his head, whether it is a bee from his own hive or no.”

He spoke much of you, a baby then nearly a year old. Our eldest child, who died when he was eighteen in Australia where he had gone for his health, was then about six months old. Your father took very kindly notice of him, but one day said to me, “ Do you know

what I am thinking?" "That your own baby is much finer?" "That is exactly what I *was* thinking!"

He left us to go to Edinburgh, the "Gray Metropolis of the North," for it was on that visit that he wrote "The Daisy."¹ He and Mr. Palgrave left us by boat, a long row of fifteen miles to Oban; and on my husband saying to the old Gaelic boatman, "Robert, you are taking over one of the greatest men in England," he replied, "That black-a-vise Mr. Tinsmith that came with Mr. Pancake! well, well!" And so ended this eagerly looked forward to, heartily enjoyed, and to us ever memorable visit!

Of those assembled then in that happy Highland home, young and old have all passed away. Mr. Palgrave lived to see, and contribute to, his friend's "Memoirs," "and I alone sit lingering here"

"Remembering all the golden hours
Now silent, and so many dead,
And him the last!"

*Farringford*²

Later my father paid a visit to Bonchurch. There he heard of Farringford as a place that might possibly be suitable for his home, as it

¹ "To Edward Lear, on his Travels in Greece" was printed this year among the collected poems.

² The name *Farringford* is old. I have in my possession deeds of the fourteenth century relating to the Farringford estate, one of the witnesses being frequently Walter de Ferringford. Prior's Manor, attached to Farringford, belonged to the Abbey of Lyra in Normandy. Many of the fields retain the old names of that time, the Prior's Field, Maiden's Croft (dedicated to the Virgin Mary), the Clerks' Hill, Abraham's Mead, etc.

was beautiful and far from the haunts of men. "If society were what it is not," wrote Lady Taylor to Aubrey de Vere, "it might be well to give up something for it." Society being what it is, he determined to quit Twickenham and to live a country life of earnest work, only seeing his many friends from time to time. When my mother and he went down to look at Farringford, they crossed the Solent in a rowing boat on a still November evening, and "One dark heron flew over the sea, backed by a daffodil sky."

Next day, as they gazed from the drawing-room window out through the distant wreath of trees towards a sea of Mediterranean blue, with rosy capes beyond, the down on the left rising above the foreground of undulating park, golden-leaved elms and chestnuts, and red-stemmed pines, they agreed that they must if possible have that view to live with.

Nov. 14th, 1853. My father writes: "I wrote on Friday to accept¹ the house [Farringford], I also wrote to-day to Moxon to advance one thousand pounds, four hundred pounds he owes me, the odd six hundred to be paid if he will in March when I get my moneys in. Why I did it? Because by buying safe debentures in the East Lincolnshire Line for two thousand five hundred pounds, with that and five hundred² a year I

¹ To lease the house with the option of buying it.

² The sum which since 1850 he had made from his books.

think we ought to get on. . . . Venables and Chapman agree in the propriety of the investment. Seymour has sent no papers yet. I don't know what is to be done with Laurence: it would be in the highest degree inconvenient for me to come back from the Isle of Wight to sit for him. Fitz would, I have no doubt, let him have his old sketch of me."

Accordingly on November the 24th, having taken the house on trial, they left Twickenham, and on the 25th entered into possession of Farringford, which was to be a home to them for forty years, and where some of my father's best-known works were written. Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie describes the place in her pleasant *Records*, as she saw it when it had become their own.

For the first time I stayed in the Island, and with the people who were dwelling there, and walked with Tennyson along High Down, treading the turf, listening to his talk, while the gulls came sideways, flashing their white breasts against the edge of the cliffs and the Poet's cloak flapped time to the gusts of the west wind. The house at Farringford itself seemed like a charmed palace, with green walls without, and speaking walls within. There hung Dante with his solemn nose and wreath; Italy gleamed over the doorways; friends' faces lined the passages, books filled the shelves, and a glow of crimson was everywhere; the oriel drawing-room window was full of green and golden leaves, of the sound of birds and of the distant sea.

My father and mother settled to a country life at once, looking after their little farm, and tending the poor and sick of the village. In the afternoons they swept up leaves, mowed the grass, gravelled the walks, and he built what he called "a bower of rushes" in the kitchen garden. The primroses and snowdrops and other flowers were a constant delight, and he began a flower dictionary. He also bought spy-glasses through which he might watch the ways and movements of the birds in the ilexes, cedar and fir trees. Geology too he took up, and trudged out with the local geologist, Keeping, on many a long expedition.

He wrote to Charles Kingsley about *Hypatia* :

1853.

MY DEAR KINGSLEY,

I hope your wife got my books which mine ordered Moxon to send. In the conclusion of the "Princess" the compositors have made a slight mistake.

Gray halls alone among their massive groves.

They have printed "their" "the" which somewhat weakens the line.

Hypatia never came ; but I cannot afford to be without it. Part of the conclusion seems to me particularly valuable. I mean the talk of the Christianized Jew to the classic boy. Hypatia's mistreatment by the Alexandrians I

found almost too horrible. It is very powerful and tragic ; but I objected to the word "naked." Pelagia's nakedness has nothing which revolts one . . . but I really was hurt at having Hypatia stript, tho' I see that it adds to the tragic, and the picture as well as the moral is a fine one.

Will you lay your hand on my Adam Smith and send it per post? I enclose you six Queen's heads for that purpose.

Believe me, dear Kingsley,

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.

CHAPTER VIII

FARRINGFORD (1853-1855)

THROUGHOUT the following chapters I have, with my mother's leave, made free use of her private journal. Most of it however has been necessarily compressed ; and the numerous anecdotes about our childhood have been eliminated.

Here however I may perhaps be allowed to note my father's attitude toward children. This has best been given in his baby-songs, "Sweet and Low," "What does little birdie say?" "Minnie and Winnie," "Dainty Little Maiden," and his dedicatory poem to "Ally." I will however endeavour to set down briefly what I myself have known of some of his ways with children, and to begin with, what I have heard of his love for them in days before my own.

When he was a young man, living at Somersby, I have been told by those of the family younger than himself that "Alfred was their delight." They would sit upon his knee, or cling about his feet, while he told them stories of his own invention that enthralled them,

long stories of hair-breadth escapes, and of travels ranging over all parts of the world. For the boys he would make himself a Colossus of Rhodes, the fun being that they should brave a "thwack" from his open hand, or escape it if they could, while rushing under the archway of his legs.

Of babies he would say: "There is something gigantic about them. The wide-eyed wonder of a babe has a grandeur in it which as children they lose. They seem to me to be prophets of a mightier race."

To his own children he was devoted. From the first he would, when my mother and he were alone, carry me in my bassinet into the drawing-room that he might watch my baby-gestures; and one of the very early things which I remember is that he helped the Master of Balliol to toss my brother and myself in a shawl. Later, he made us, though still very young, as much as possible his little companions. My mother was not strong enough to walk as far as we did, and so my father would harness my brother and myself to her garden carriage, and himself push from behind; and in this fashion we raced up hill and down dale. When the days were warm enough, perhaps we sat together on a bank in one of our home-fields, and he would read to us, or in cold weather would play football with us boys in an old chalk-pit, or build castles of flint on the top of

the "Beacon Cliff," and we all then cannonaded from a distance, or he would teach us to shoot with bow and arrow. Some days we went flower-hunting, and on our return home, if the flower was unknown, he would say, "Bring me my Baxter's *Flowering Plants*," to look it out for us.

If it was rainy or stormy, and we were kept indoors, he often built cities for us with bricks, or played battledore and shuttlecock; or sometimes he read Grimm's *Fairy Stories* or repeated ballads to us. I remember his emphatic recitation in those far-off years of

"Malbrouck s'en va-t'en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine,"

and of "Si le roi m'avait donné
Paris sa grand' ville,"

and of "Ye Mariners of England,"

and of "The Burial of Sir John Moore."

On feast days he would blow bubbles and then grow much excited over the "gorgeous colours and landscapes, and the planets breaking off from their suns, and the single star becoming a double star," which he saw in these bubbles; or if it were evening he would help us to act scenes from some well-known play. He enjoyed superintending our boy-charades, and if a pro-

logue had to be written would make the most amusing part of it.

In the autumn we had frequent brushing up of leaves from the lawns, and he would employ us in helping to make new glades through the shrubs or in re-shingling old paths. It was a red-letter day when an Italian organ-grinder came, as he did more years than one, and was asked to warm himself by our bonfire of leaves and wood, while my father and he told stories of Savoy, Piedmont and Lombardy. My father was always interested in the imaginative views which we children took of our surroundings. Of these I may give one instance : how Lionel had been brought from his bed at night, wrapt in a blanket, to see the great comet, and suddenly awaking and looking out at the starry night, asked, "Am I dead?"

The chief anxiety of my parents, I remember, was that we should be strictly truthful, and my father's words, spoken long ago, still dwell with me, "A truthful man generally has all virtues." He was very particular about our being courteous to the poor. The severest punishment he ever gave me, though that was, it must be confessed, slight, was for some want of respect to one of our servants.

The first Latin I learnt from him was Horace's *O fons Bandusiæ*, and the first Greek the beginning of the *Iliad*. Before this he liked to make us learn and repeat ballads, and simple

poems about Nature, but he would never teach us his own poems, or allow us to get them by heart.

In the summer as children we generally passed through London to Lincolnshire, and he would take us for a treat to Westminster Abbey, the Zoological Gardens, the Tower of London, the Elgin Marbles at the British Museum, or the National Gallery. In the last he much delighted and would point us out the various excellences of the different masters; he always led the way first of all to the "Raising of Lazarus" by Sebastian del Piombo and to Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne."

A favourite saying was, "Make the lives of children as beautiful and as happy as possible." In the later years of his life his grandchildren loved a romp with him, and enjoyed their drives when he would fight them with newspapers or play "pat-a-cake" with them. To the end he liked a "frolic with young things," and when on one of his last walks he met the village school-children, he pointed his stick at them, barking like a dog to make them laugh. In 1889, after he had turned eighty, he wrote the lullaby in "Romney's Remorse," partly for his little grandson Lionel:

Father and mother will watch you grow,
And gather the roses whenever they blow,
And find the white heather wherever you go,
My sweet.

These anecdotes about him and his children, as I read them over, seem trivial enough, yet I preserve them, as testifying in their way to the "eternal youth of the poet."

The year 1854 opened with the booming of cannon from Portsmouth, where the artillery were practising for the Crimean war. On March 16th Lionel was born. My father when he heard of the birth was looking through the study window at the planet Mars "as he glowed like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast,"¹ and so determined to give the name Lionel.

After Lionel's birth he writes to Mrs. Cameron and to John Forster :

March 22nd, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. CAMERON,

In my first batch of letters, sent off in all directions, when the new babe was born, I omitted to write to you, not willingly, but of necessity, not knowing your "Terrace," and my wife, who did know, not being to be spoken to. . . . But I hope that this day, the sixth from her confinement, will, ere it fade (a very brilliant one over cape and sea), see her well, except for weakness. I have been mesmerizing her, which, she says, has done her a great deal of good. If she could

¹ Mars generally passes rapidly through Leo, but was this year for a little time stationary there.

but get a sleepful night, I have no doubt it would be all right by the morrow. As for the little fellow, he is as jolly as can be, and hardly cries at all yet. Little Hallam watches him, awe-struck, cannot make him out, and occasionally wails over him. I daresay that these are phenomena which you have often tenderly watched in your own family. You have not written, which I would far rather impute to the fact of my not having written than to the possibility of your being unwell. Pray Heaven the last be not the case with you ; neither has Mary Marshall answered, which makes me anxious about her. God bless you, dear Julia Cameron, and

Believe me affectionately yours,

A. TENNYSON.

FARRINGFORD HOUSE, ISLE OF WIGHT,
March 29th, 1854.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I understand from Archibald Peel that you are aggrieved at my not writing to you : that is wrong, morbid I think. I almost never write except in answer. Why, if you wished to know of me, did you not write to me and you would have heard ? Pray don't be distrustful. I love you all the same, tho' I should not write for 100 years.

Now it happens that a letter was half written to you partly to condole with you on the loss of

dear good genial Talfourd, partly to announce the birth of another son of mine. I had dozens of letters to indite at that time to female cousins, etc., and I put this by to finish another day, and I cannot find it, or I would send it to prove that you are not forgotten, but you *must* be more trustful of me, or how can we get on? You must at any rate try the effect of a small note addrest to *me* before you find fault with me.

A reason for my not writing much is the bad condition of my right eye which quite suddenly came on as I was reading or trying to read small Persian text. You know perhaps how very minute in some of those Eastern tongues are the differences of letters: a little dot more or less: in a moment, after a three hours' hanging over this scratchy text, my right eye became filled with great masses of floating blackness, and the other eye similarly affected tho' not so badly. I am in a great fear about them, and think of coming up to town about them, for (whatever you may conjecture) I have not been in town for many months, not ever since I came here—did not even pass thro' town on my way here but went by Kingston.

I beseech your and all my friends' most charitable interpretation of whatever I do or may be said to do.

Our post only allows us from 11 o'clock to 1 o'clock to receive and answer letters which is (I think) another reason why I write so few.

I have been correcting my brother Frederick's proofs.¹ I dare say you may have seen notice of their approaching publication. He is a true poet, though his book (I think) ought to have been a shorter one.

Farewell, my dear fellow, God bless you and keep you.

Yours affectionately and unchangingly,
A. TENNYSON.

My wife's kind regards to you : she has been in a great state of suffering and sleeplessness for nine days, but at last I set her right by mesmerizing,—the effect was really wonderful.

In April the diary says that he drew my mother out in her garden chair to see the "wealth of daffodils" and the ruby sheaths of the lime leaves. At this time Edward Fitzgerald stayed at Farringford for a fortnight ;² he sketched and my father carved in wood. One day FitzGerald brought home bunches of horned poppies and yellow irises over which like a boy he was ecstatic. In the evenings he played Mozart, or translated Persian Odes for my father, who, as has been said in the letter to Forster, had hurt his eyes by poring over a small-printed Persian Grammar : until this with Hafiz and other Persian books had to be

¹ *Days and Hours*.

² After this FitzGerald never visited any of his friends except Fanny Kemble ; he shut himself up in solitude at Woodbridge.

hidden away, for he had seen "the Persian letters stalking like giants round the walls of his room." My father observed that his best working days were "in the early spring, when Nature begins to awaken from her winter sleep."

To this date belongs the following letter to a friend :

You will not often see anything so sweet as my little, not quite two years old boy, who is toddling up and down the room, and saying, "Da, date," and "dada," meaning "give" in a very respectable Italian lingo, pointing to everything that strikes his fancy. Singularly enough the very day when I despatched my note to you another boy was born at 9 p.m., a lusty young fellow, who strikes the elder one with awe, sometimes into sympathetic tears, sometimes into a kind of mimic bleating, when he hears the younger one's inarticulate cooings. The first we had was born dead (a great grief to us), really the finest boy of the three; and I nearly broke my heart with going to look at him. He lay like a little warrior, having fought the fight, and failed, with his hands clenched, and a frown on his brow. . . . If my latest born were to die to-night, I do not think that I should suffer so much as I did, looking on that noble little fellow who had never seen the light. My wife, who had had a most terrible

time lasting near the whole of one Easter Sunday, never saw him. Well for her.

Yours, A. TENNYSON.

In May my father stayed in London and in August visited Glastonbury, Wells and the Cheddar Cliffs.

My father's letter-diary

May 18th, 1854. 60 Lincoln's Inn Fields. I called on Moxon to arrange the "Illustrated Edition of Poems," and we went round to the artist Creswick, a capital broad genial fellow; Mulready, an old man, was full of vivacity and showed me lots of his drawings and one or two of his pictures. Then on to Horsley who was likewise very amiable and said that I was the painter's poet, etc., then on to Millais, who has agreed to come down in a month's time and take little Hallam as an illustration of "Dora." Sir E. Landseer I did not call upon and Holman Hunt was out of town.

Went to Forster's, and am going now to dine with Spedding somewhere, and then going to the Exhibition.

May 21st. Grove called and will be ready to show us the Crystal Palace. On Friday I dine with Frederick Locker, on Saturday with Forster.

May 22nd. I went to the Crystal Palace yesterday with Weld: certainly a marvellous

place, but yet all in confusion. I do not think that it will be worth while to go up on the 10th for the opening, as it will be by no means so striking an affair as the last opening, 1851. I was much pleased with the Pompeian house and with the Iguanodons and Ichthyosaurs. I dined with Frank Lushington at the Oxford and Cambridge Club afterwards; Horatio dined with us. Tom Taylor came to Spedding's in the evening and gave me a book of Breton ballads, exceedingly beautiful, many of them.

May 23rd. I called on Hallam yesterday, he looks very well.

August

I came to Glastonbury after parting from Grant,¹ then to Yeovil in a fly, 17 miles, which rather jarred against my paternity when I thought that little Hallam and Lionel had to be educated. I went to the Abbey. As soon as I got there, there rose an awful thunderstorm, and I took shelter over Arimathæan Joseph's bones in the crypt of his chapel for they say (*credat Judæus*) he lies there. Only one arch remains.

Walked over to Wells. To Wookey Hole this morning, a cave; it was not quite what I wanted to see, tho' very grim. Am at the Swan Hotel, shall go over to Cheddar to-morrow.

Arrived at Cheddar to-day and have just seen

¹ Sir Alexander Grant who was first head of the University of Bombay, afterwards Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

a stalactite cavern, a thing I had never seen before.

August 17th. Corfe Castle, Christchurch, very well worth seeing : Bournemouth fashionable, not at all a place to buy a house in. We found an old Waterloo soldier on the coast.

When my father had returned to Farringford, he and my mother "saw a great deal of the Simeons, Aubrey de Vere and Baron de Schroeter from Swainston, and lengthy were the discussions on Roman Catholicism." My father was much impressed by the deeply felt religious enthusiasm of the Baron, who was like an old ascetic monk, and anxious to convert my parents.

Of Sir John Simeon's first visits his daughter, Mrs. Richard Ward, writes :

On the day of Lionel's christening my father paid his first visit to Farringford, and found the family party just returning from church. During these early years, it was one of my father's greatest pleasures to ride or drive over from Swainston in the summer afternoons. He and the Tennysons would go long expeditions through the lanes and over the downs : then back through the soft evening air to dinner and to the long evening of talk and of reading, which knit "that fair companionship" and made it "such a friendship as had mastered time."

It was then that my father worked at "Maud," morning and evening, sitting in his hard high-backed wooden chair in his little

room at the top of the house. His "sacred pipes," as he called them, were half an hour after breakfast, and half an hour after dinner, when no one was allowed to be with him, for then his best thoughts came to him. As he made the different poems he would repeat or read them. The constant reading of the new poems aloud was the surest way of helping him to find out any defects there might be. During his "sacred half-hours" and his other working hours and even on the Downs, he would murmur his new passages or new lines as they came to him, a habit which had always been his since boyhood, and which caused the Somersby cook to say "What is master Awlfred always a praying for?"

Aubrey de Vere writes of this year :

In 1854 I went from Swainston, the residence of Sir John Simeon, my friend, and the friend no less of Alfred Tennyson, in whose elegiac lines his memory is embalmed for ever, to Farringford, where the poet then made abode with his wife and two children. The eldest was about two years old; the other an infant in arms; and I was so much struck by his eyes, the most contemplative which I had ever seen, that I exclaimed, "When that child grows to be a man he must be a Carthusian monk!" "Nothing of the sort," was the answer I received; "but a happy husband, and a happy father, in a happy home." The home I stood in was a happy home; and the fortnight I spent in it was one I can never forget. The recollection of it is

all the more delightful because it carries with it little sense of variety, "So like, so very like was day to day." The year had reached its zenith: the sky was almost always blue, and the lovely gleam of sea was a somewhat darker blue, while the healthful breezes of Freshwater prevented even the noontide from feeling sultry. The earlier part of the day I spent chiefly in reading and writing: in the afternoon we sometimes read aloud in the open air, or rather we listened to the Poet's reading, with such distractions alone as were caused by a bird-note louder than the rest or a distant sea-gleam more bright. On one occasion our book, which we agreed in greatly admiring, was Coventry Patmore's *Angel in the House*, then recent. Alfred and I had many a breezy walk along the Downs and as far as The Needles, sometimes with distant views of the coast flushed by sunset, sometimes with a nearer one of the moonbeams "marbling" the wet sea-sands, as the wave recoiled, which last always reminded me of Landor's lines,

"And the long moonbeam on the hard wet sands
Lay like a jasper column half uprear'd."

Tennyson was engaged on his new poem "Maud." Its origin and composition were, as he described them, singular. He had accidentally lighted upon a poem of his own which begins, "O that 'twere possible," and which had long before been published in a selected volume got up by Lord Northampton for the aid of a sick clergyman. It had struck him, in consequence, I think, of a suggestion made by Sir John Simeon, that, to render the poem fully intelligible, a preceding one was necessary. He wrote it; the second poem too required a predecessor; and thus the whole work was written, as it were, *backwards*. The readers of

“Maud” seldom observe that in the love-complexities of that poem the birds take a vehement part. The “birds in the high Hall-garden” are worldly birds, factious for the young Lord and the millionaire Brother :

Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
One is come to woo her ?

The “birds in our wood” are as ardent partizans of the lovers. I remarked to the Poet on this circumstance ; but his answer was as vague as the “mowt a beän” of the “Northern Farmer.”

This summer my father wrote of Freshwater to a friend : “Ours is by far in my opinion the most noteworthy part of the island, with an air on the Downs ‘worth,’ as somebody said, ‘sixpence a pint.’”

Through the autumn and winter evenings he translated aloud to my mother the sixth *Æneid* of Virgil and Homer’s description of Hades, and they read Dante’s *Inferno* together. Whewell’s *Plurality of Worlds* he also carefully studied. “It is to me anything,” he writes, “but a satisfactory book. It is inconceivable that the whole Universe was merely created for us who live in this third-rate planet of a third-rate sun.”

The excitement about the Crimean War was intense. On October 10th the papers were full of the particulars of the battle of the Alma.¹

¹ My father wrote the first stanza of a song entitled “The Alma River,” which my mother finished and set to music :

Frenchman, a hand in thine !
Our flags have waved together !

The journal says: "Looking from the Beacon and seeing the white cliffs and the clear sea, their violet gray shading seemed to us tender and sad; perhaps the landscape seemed so sad because of the sorrowful news of the death-roll in the Crimea and of the death of our neighbour Colonel Hood in the trenches."

In November an unknown friend sent an account of the charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava on October 25th,—how the Scots Greys and the Inniskilleners flung themselves against the solid Russian column. The writer says: "Our ears were frenzied by the monotonous incessant cannonade going on for days together."

On November 22nd Millais' long promised visit was paid. He was "beguiled into sweeping up leaves and burning them.¹ He made sketches of Hallam and his mother, Hallam appearing in the illustration to 'Dora.'" There were talks with Millais "as to the limits of

Let us drink to the health of thine and mine
At the battle of Alma River.

Our flags together furl'd,
Henceforward no other strife—
Than which of us most shall help the world,
Which lead the noblest life.

Then pledge we our glorious dead,
Swear to be one for ever,
And God's best blessing on each dear head
That rests by the Alma River.

¹ Perhaps this suggested his fine early picture upon the subject.

realism in painting." My father hated the modern realism in painting and literature, notably as shown by the French schools. With regard to certain English pictures he said to Millais that from his point of view, "if you have human beings before a wall, the wall ought to be picturesquely painted, and in harmony with the idea pervading the picture, but must not be made obtrusive by the bricks being *too* minutely drawn, since it is the human beings that ought to have the real interest for us in a dramatic subject picture."

When Millais left, my parents read together Souvestre's account of the Bretons. The fact that their most popular songs are religious and that, when the cholera was among them, they would not listen to the doctors until they put their advice in song, set to national airs, struck my father. On Dec. 2nd he wrote "The Charge of the Light Brigade"¹ in a few minutes, after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase "some one had blundered," and this was the origin of the metre of his poem. Christmas Eve is kept by his "blowing bubbles for the children, and making fun for them by humping up his shoulders high, and pretending to be a giant."

At the end of the year he received Professor Ferrier's *Institutes of Metaphysic*, with the following letter :

¹ Published in the *Examiner*, Dec. 9th.

DEAR SIR,

ST. ANDREWS, *Dec. 17th, 1854.*

You were among the very first to whom my book was to be sent and I supposed that you had received it some six weeks ago. Possibly Blackwood did not know your address and therefore sent it to your publisher.

If anything strikes you as inconsecutive in the reasoning you will do me a favour by pointing it out.

One eminent authority has given it as his opinion that there is a non sequitur in the passage from Prop. I. to Prop. II. To me this seems odd. I esteem it a high honour to have now made your acquaintance and a great privilege to be allowed to subscribe myself

Very truly yours, F. FERRIER.

Frederick Tennyson wrote from Florence :

MY DEAR E. AND A.,

Dec. 30th, 1854.

Browning comes in occasionally, but poor Mrs. B. never stirs out during the winter. Under the rose, they are both preparing new poems, Browning a batch of Lyrics which are to be the real thing, Mrs. B. a kind of Metrical Romance. Though I have the highest esteem for Browning, and believe him to be a man of infinite learning, jest and bonhommie, and moreover a sterling heart that reverbs no hollowness, I verily believe his school of poetry to be the most grotesque conceivable. With the exception of the "Blot on the 'Scutcheon," through which you may possibly grope your way without the aid of an Ariadne, the rest appear to me to be Chinese puzzles, trackless labyrinths, unapproachable nebulosities. Yet he has a very Catholic taste in poetry, doing justice to everything good in all poets past or present, and he is one who has a profound admiration of Alfred. I hear from

Palgrave that A. has a new poem on the stocks ; a few of the best stanzas in your next letter I should prize highly, and the Brownings would be delighted to see a specimen of it. I suppose the poem on the "Charge of the Six Hundred" in the *Examiner*, signed A. T., is really by Alfred. Browning sent me the paper but I could give him no information on the subject.

Your affectionate brother, F. TENNYSON.

On Jan. 10th, 1855, my father had "finished, and read out, several lyrics of 'Maud.'" The weather in January and February was arctic and the waves froze on the beach.

The news of the loss of Sir John Franklin, my mother's uncle, in the Arctic Regions was at this time "a great shock."¹ It is interesting to note that Dr. Kane, who was on the second Grinnell Expedition in search of Sir John, honoured my father by naming a natural rock column 480 feet high, on a pedestal 280 feet high, to the north of latitude 79 degrees, "Tennyson's Monument."

My father wrote to him :

DEAR SIR,

Your book has not yet reached me here in this remote place, but, as I learn with much regret that the state of your health obliges you to leave England very soon, I will not wait to see it before I write to request you will do me

¹ My mother thought that her uncle's last words to her were : "If I am lost, remember, Emily, my firm belief that there is open sea at the North Pole."

the favour of allowing me an opportunity to thank you in person for what I am told are your kind expressions towards myself in your book, and for the honour you have done me by giving my name to that noble pillar. My wife and I hope that you will feel equal to coming so far out of your way to your ship as to pay us a visit here, and that a little rest will soon restore you to your former health.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours very truly, A. TENNYSON.

Nov. 4th, 1856.

FARRINGFORD, FRESHWATER, I.W.

P.S. If there be a Miss Cross in your house, and if it be the Miss Cross whom I knew in Scotland, will you give her my best regards?

DEAR DR. KANE,

Only yesterday, and then too late for me to return you thanks by that day's post, arrived your present. The book is really magnificent. I do not think that I ever met with one which gives such vivid pictures of Arctic scenery. Nay I am quite sure I never did; and indeed I feel that I owe you more thanks for it, and for your warm-hearted inscription, and your memorial of me in the wilderness than I could well enclose in as many words. So I will say nothing about it, only beg you to accept that volume of my poems containing the line which

(as C. Weld writes) came into your mind when you stood first before the great greenstone minaret. . . .

Believe me, dear Dr. Kane,

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

In February my father "translated aloud three Idylls of Theocritus, *Hylas*, *The Island of Cos*, and *The Syracusan Women*." In March "Woolner made a medallion of him (the best likeness that had yet been made)."

On March 22nd my father received this letter from Ruskin :

DENMARK HILL, CAMBERWELL,
21st March, 1855.

DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I venture to write to you, because as I was talking about you with Mr. Woolner yesterday, he gave me more pleasure than I can express by telling me that you wished to see my "Turners."

By several untoward chances I have been too long hindered from telling you face to face how much I owe you. So you see at last I seize the wheel of fortune by its nearest spoke, begging you with the heartiest entreaty I can, to tell me when you are likely to be in London and to fix a day if possible that I may keep it wholly for you, and prepare my "Turners" to look their rosiest and best. Capricious they are as enchanted opals, but they must surely shine for you.

Any day will do for me if you give me notice two or three days before, but please come soon, for I have much to say to you and am eager to say it, above all to tell you how for a thousand things I am gratefully and respectfully yours,

J. RUSKIN.

In April my father walked to Bonchurch, and wrote to my mother : "If I stop another day here, I may have a chance of seeing double stars thro' a telescope of Dr. Mann's, a very clever interesting doctor with whom I spent two hours this morning. He showed me things thro' his microscope."

He was home again on April 25th, and "copied out 'Maud' for the press, and read 'The Lady of the Lake,' having just finished Goethe's 'Helena.'"

On June 6th he writes : "I have strangely enough accepted the Oxford Doctorship. Friends told me I ought to accept it, so I did." Temple¹ had suggested my father for that degree. My parents stayed at Balliol ; and my father said, as he sat in the Balliol gardens, "The shouts of the Undergraduates from the theatre are like the shouts of the Roman crowd, 'Christiani ad Leones !'" He was very nervous before going, but entered the theatre quite calmly with Sir John Burgoyne, the stately-looking Montalembert, and Sir de Lacy Evans. He sat on the steps nearly under Lord Derby, then there was one great shout for "In Memoriam," one for "Alma" and one for "Inkermann." The sea of upturned faces was very striking, and my father had a "tremendous ovation" when he received his degree. The new doctor ordinarily borrows a doctor's robes from a tailor and just

¹ Now Archbishop of Canterbury.

wears them in the Sheldonian Theatre for the ceremony. But my father after luncheon asked the Master of Balliol whether it would be against rule and propriety if he might have a smoke, as it was his fancy to do so, among the green trees when clad in his red doctoral robes. The Master said that he might do so, and he smoked in the then walled-in Master's garden, now open to the college. "In the evening at Magdalen he had long talks with Mr. Gladstone and Montalembert." Next day Arthur Butler and Max Müller took my father and mother about Oxford, and to the Bodleian, to see the Illuminated Missals, and Dr. Wellesley showed them the Raffaele sketches. At night they had tea with Professor Johnson and Professor Adams, and looked at the Nebulæ in Cassiopeia through the big telescope, the Ring Nebula in Lyra and also some double stars.

On July 7th they reached home, and the last touch was put to "Maud," before giving it to the publisher. Up to the time of my father's death, when his friends asked him to read aloud from his own poetry, he generally chose "Maud," the "Ode on the Duke of Wellington," or "Guinevere."

Translations into French of "Ring out, wild bells," and "Mariana in the Moated Grange," were sent him from France.

He pointed out "what a poor language French is for translating English poetry, although

it is the best language for delicate *nuances* of meaning. How absurd 'Ring out, wild bells' sounds in the translation 'Sonnez, Cloches, Sonnez,' and what a ridiculous rendering of 'He cometh not, she said' is 'Tom ne vient pas'!"¹

August 6th. "The Balaclava Charge" with the following short preface was forwarded to John Forster to be printed on a fly-leaf for the Crimean Soldiers.

August 8th, 1855.

Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, I have ordered a thousand copies of it to be printed for

¹ About this time he wrote a letter to the Breton poet Hippolyte Lucas :

Une Lettre inédite d'Alfred Tennyson à Hippolyte Lucas

CHER MONSIEUR,

Ce m'est véritablement une douce chose que d'avoir trouvé une âme poétique qui puisse fraterniser avec la mienne de l'autre côté de la grande mer. Les poètes, comme vous le dites fort bien, sont ou plutôt devraient être reliés ensemble par une chaîne électrique, car ils ne doivent pas parler seulement pour leurs compatriotes. J'ai lu vos vers plusieurs fois, et ils m'ont causé plus de plaisir à chaque nouvelle lecture. Je suis particulièrement flatté de leur ressemblance avec mon propre poème.

Si jamais je fais un voyage en Bretagne, j'aurai l'honneur et le plaisir de vous faire une visite. Votre province est riche en légendes poétiques de toute espèce, et par cela même particulièrement chère aux Anglais. J'espère la voir un jour, et vous en même temps.

En attendant, croyez-moi, cher monsieur, votre tout dévoué

ALFRED TENNYSON.

them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but if what I have heard be true they will not be displeased to receive these copies from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honour them.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

To John Forster

[Undated.]

MY DEAR FORSTER,

In the first place thanks for your critique which seems to me good and judicious. Many thanks, my wife will write to you about it; but what I am writing to you now about is a matter which interests me very much. My friend Chapman of 3 Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, writes to me thus:—"An acquaintance of mine in the department of the S.P.G. as he calls it (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) was saying how a chaplain in the Crimea sent by the Society writes to the Society—(neither he nor the Society being suspected of any Tennysonian prejudices)—'The *greatest service you can do*¹ just now is to send out on printed slips Mr. A. T.'s 'Charge at Balaclava.' It is the greatest favourite of the soldiers—half are singing it, and all want to have it in black and white, so as to read what has so taken them.'"

¹ Thus underscored in the original.

Now, my dear Forster, you see I cannot possibly be deaf to such an appeal. I wish to send out about 1000 slips, and I don't at all want the S.P.G. or any one to send out the *version last printed*: it would, I believe, quite disappoint the soldiers. Don't you live quite close to the S.P.G.? Could you not send Henry over to say that *I* am sending over the soldiers' version of my ballad, and beg them not to stir in the matter? The soldiers are the best critics in what pleases them. I send you a copy which retains the "Light Brigade," and the "blunder'd"; and I declare it is the best of the two, and that the criticism of two or three London friends (not yours) induced me to spoil it. For Heaven's sake get *this* copy fairly printed at once, and sent out. I have sent it by this post likewise to Moxon, but you are closer to your printer. Concoct with him how it is all to be managed: I am so sorry that I am not in town to have done it at once. I have written a little note to the soldiers which need not be sent—just as you like. It might be merely printed "From A. Tennyson." Please see to all this: and see that there are *no mistakes*; and I will be bound to you for evermore, and more than ever yours in great haste,

A. TENNYSON.

P.S. I am convinced now after writing it out that this *is* the best version.

The following tribute was received from Scutari :

We had in hospital a man of the Light Brigade, one of the few who survived that fatal mistake, the Balaclava charge ; but which, deplorable as it was, at least tended to show the high state of discipline attained in the British army. I spoke to several of those engaged in that deadly conflict, and they could describe accurately the position of the Russian cannon ; were perfectly aware when obeying that word of command, that they rode to almost certain death. This patient had received a kick in the chest from a horse long after the battle of Balaclava, while in barracks at Scutari. He was depressed in spirits, which prevented him from throwing off the disease engendered by the blow. The doctor remarked that he wished the soldier could be roused. Amongst other remedies leeches were prescribed. While watching them I tried to enter into a conversation with him, spoke of the charge, but could elicit only monosyllabic replies. A copy of Tennyson's poem having been lent me that morning, I took it out and read it. The man, with kindling eye, at once entered upon a spirited description of the fatal gallop between the guns' mouths to and from that cannon-crowded height. He asked to hear it again, but, as by this time a number of convalescents were gathered around, I slipped out of the ward. The chaplain who had lent me the poem, understanding the enthusiasm with which it had been received, afterwards procured from England a number of copies for distribution. In a few days the invalid requested the doctor to discharge him for duty, being now in health ; but whether the cure was effected by the leeches or the poem it is impossible to say. On giving the card the medical man murmured, " Well done, Tennyson ! "

On one of the anniversaries of the Balaclava charge a banquet was given in London, and my father was pressed to attend. Being unable to do so, he sent the following letter to the chairman of the committee :

FARRINGFORD, FRESHWATER.

DEAR SIR,

I cannot attend your banquet, but I enclose £5 to defray some of its expenses, or to be distributed as you may think fit among the most indigent of the survivors of that glorious charge. A blunder it may have been, but one for which England should be grateful, having thereby learnt that her soldiers are the most honest and most obedient under the sun. I will drink a cup of wine on the 25th to the health and long life of all your fine fellows ; and, thanking yourself and your comrades heartily for the cordial invitation sent me, I pray you all to believe me, now and ever, your admiring fellow-countryman,

A. TENNYSON.

He had intended to write a poem on the soldiers' battle of Inkermann, but only got as far as the first line : "Strong eight thousand of Inkermann."

At this time my father's friend Harry Lushington, who with his brother Franklin had published some stirring poems on the Crimean war, died in Paris.

My father's letter-diary of days in the New Forest

August 31st. Haven't had the heart to get further than Winchester and Salisbury. I am going to-day to take a gig across country to Lyndhurst.

Lyndhurst, Sept. 1st. Tho' I had said that the New Forest, for didn't I expect that it was disforested, would not do again; tho', when I started this morning, I got on the wrong track for four miles or so out of the way of the great timber; the vast solemn beeches delighted me, but my soul was not satisfied, for I did not meet with any so very large beech as I had met with before. Yet I rejoiced in the beeches and have resolved to stay till Monday and see them twice again. I have lost the tobacco case which Simeon gave me; I am grieved, but it was so like the colour of last year's beech leaves that I did not see it when I turned to leave the spot where I had smoked.

Crown Hotel, Lyndhurst. Sept. 2nd. I lost my way in the Forest to-day, and have walked I don't know how many miles. I found a way back to Lyndhurst by resolutely following a track which brought me at last to a turnpike. On this I went a mile in the wrong direction, that is towards Christchurch, then met a surly fellow who grudgingly told me I was four miles from Lyndhurst, whereby I turned and walked to Lyndhurst. My admiration of the

Forest is great: it is true old wild English Nature, and then the fresh heath-sweetened air is so delicious. The Forest is grand.

London, Sept. 28th. I dined yesterday with the Brownings and had a very pleasant evening. Both of them are great admirers of poor little "Maud." The two Rossettis came in during the evening.¹

October 1st. I dined at Twickenham, my mother looking very well and intending to keep the house on another year. I also dined with the Camerons last night, she is more wonderful than ever I think in her wild-beaming benevolence. I read "Maud" to five or six people at the Brownings' (on Sept. 28th).

Mrs. Browning writes thereupon to my mother :

13 DORSET STREET, *October, 1855.*

MY DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

If I had not received your kindest of letters I had yet made up my mind not to leave England without writing to you to thank you (surely it would have been your due) for the deep pleasure we had in Mr. Tennyson's visit to us. He didn't come back as he said he would to teach me the "Brook" (which I persist nevertheless in fancying I understand a little), but he did so much and left such a voice (both him "and a voice!") crying out "Maud" to us, and helping the effect of the poem by the personality, that it's an

¹ Gabriel Rossetti wrote to William Allingham about this evening in an unpublished letter: "He is quite as glorious in his way as Browning in his, and perhaps of the two even more impressive on the whole personally."

increase of joy and life to us ever. Then may we not venture to think now of Alfred Tennyson *our friend*? and was it not worth while coming from Italy to England for so much? Let me say too another thing, that though I was hindered (through having women friends with me, whom I loved and yet could not help wishing a little further just then) from sitting in the smoke and hearing the talk of the next room, yet I heard some sentences which, in this materialistic low-talking world, it was comfort and triumph to hear from the lips of such a man. So I thank you both, and my husband's thanks go with mine.

As to a visit to you, how pleasant that you should ask us! This year we could not have gone, next year perhaps we shall not be able any more * * * but every year of our lives it will be pleasant to think that you have wished it. Dear Mrs. Tennyson, you do not mind the foolish remarks on "Maud" * * * do you? These things are but signs of an advance made, of the tide rising. People on the shore are troubled in their picking up of shells a little.

Kiss your children for me: I hope my child may play with them before long. My husband's "Men and Women" shall go to Mr. Tennyson on the publication, not to trouble him (understand) with exaction of a letter or opinion, but simply as a sign of personal regard and respect.

Dear Mrs. Tennyson and dear Mr. Tennyson, believe us *both* very affectionately yours, though I have but the name of

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

P.S. (We leave England to-morrow.) God bless you, dear and admirable friends. My wife feels what she says, and I feel with her.

Affectionately yours, ROBERT BROWNING.

On his return the evening books were Milton, Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, Thackeray's *Humourists*, some of Hallam's *History* and of Carlyle's *Cromwell*.

This October "Mr. Lear paid us a visit and sang his settings of 'Mariana,' 'Lotos-Eaters,' 'O let the solid ground,' and 'O that 'twere possible.'"

One day my father received "an interesting letter telling him of a man who had been roused from a state of suicidal despondency by 'The Two Voices.'"

At the end of the year an unknown Nottingham artizan came to call. My father asked him to dinner and at his request read "Maud." It appears that the poor man had sent his poems beforehand. They had been acknowledged, but had not been returned, and had been forgotten. He was informed that the poems, thus sent, were always looked at, although my father and mother had not time to pass judgment on them. A most pathetic incident of this kind, my father told me, happened to him at Twickenham, when a Waterloo soldier, out of admiration for the Wellington Ode, brought him twelve large cantos on the battle of Waterloo. The veteran had actually taught himself in his old age to read and write that he might thus commemorate Wellington's great victory. The epic lay for some time under the sofa in my father's study, and was a source of much anxiety to him.

How could he go through such a vast poem? One day he mustered up courage and took a portion out. It opened on the heading of a canto: "The Angels encamped above the field of Waterloo." On that day, at least, he "read no more." He gave the author, when he called for his manuscript, this criticism: "Though great images loom here and there, your poem could not be published as a whole." The old man answered nothing, wrapt up each of the twelve cantos carefully, placed them in a strong oak case and carried them off. He was asked to come again but he never came.¹

¹ A friend narrates the following incident as showing that my father "sang for some whom we might forget to include in our fellowship of sorrow." "One moonlight night, when sailing, some years since in the Malay Archipelago, I came on deck to find the ship in charge of the mate, a taciturn mariner, uncouth and of uncompromising visage. A chance remark, however, about the beauty of the night brought a line from a well-known stanza of 'In Memoriam' as reply. I completed the verse with undisguised pleasure, and this fairly broke the ice of his reserve. For the rest of that watch the mate paced up and down the deck, reciting to me the greater part of the 'Idylls,' and the first half of 'Maud.' I shall never forget the feeling with which he lilted out the song 'Birds in the high Hall garden.' During the next week—'all in the blue unclouded weather' of that beautiful Archipelago—the mate and I talked together on the one subject, which had kept him, he averred, from suicide by drowning—a sailor's death more common than people think. For heart-whole delight in the poetry, for pure devotion to his image of the poet, I place that mate of a Malay coaster above all the Tennysonians I have met."

Let not the solid ground
Fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet Heavens endure
Not close & darken above me,
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad
I shall have lived my day.

From the Original MS.

CHAPTER IX

"MAUD"¹

After reading "Maud":

Leave him to us, ye good and sage,
Who stiffen in your middle age.
Ye loved him once, but now forbear ;
Yield him to those who hope and dare,
And have not yet to forms consign'd
A rigid ossifying mind.

Ionica.

PURE lyrical poetry of every form had been essayed by my father before 1855, but a monodramatic lyric, like "Maud," was a novelty. In consequence its meaning and drift were widely misunderstood even by educated readers, which partly accounts for the outburst of hostile criticism that greeted its appearance. It is a "Drama of the Soul," set in a landscape glorified by Love, and according to Lowell, "The antiphonal voice

¹ The volume contained "Maud" (*written at Farringford*), "The Brook," "The Letters," "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," "The Daisy," "To the Rev. F. D. Maurice," "Will," "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

to ‘In Memoriam.’”¹ Nothing perhaps more justified what has been said of my father, that had he not been a poet, he might have been remarkable as an actor, than his reading of “Maud,” with all its complex contrasts of motive and action. He generally prefaced his reading with an explanation, the substance of which has been given by Dr. Mann in his *Maud Vindicated*.

² “At the opening of the drama, the chief person or hero of the action is introduced with scenery and incidents artistically disposed around his figure, so as to make the reader at once acquainted with certain facts in his history, which it is essential should be known. Although still a young man, he has lost his father some years before by a sudden and violent death, following immediately upon unforeseen ruin brought about by an unfortunate speculation in which the deceased had engaged. Whether the death was the result of accident, or self-inflicted in a moment of despair, no one knows, but the son’s mind has been painfully possessed by a suspicion of villainy and foul play somewhere, because an old friend of his family became suddenly and unaccountably rich by the same transaction that had brought ruin to the dead. Shortly after the decease of his father, the

¹ My father sometimes called “In Memoriam,” “The Way of the Soul.”

² My father desired that the passage by Dr. Mann, here quoted, should be inserted among his notes 1891-92.

bereaved young man, by the death of his mother, is left quite alone in the world. He continues thenceforth to reside in the retired village in which his early days have been spent, but the sad experiences of his youth have confirmed the bent of a mind constitutionally prone to depression and melancholy. Brooding in loneliness upon miserable memories and bitter fancies, his temperament as a matter of course becomes more and more morbid and irritable. He can see nothing in human affairs that does not awaken in him disgust and contempt. Evil glares out from all social arrangements, and unqualified meanness and selfishness appear in every human form, so he keeps to himself and chews the cud of cynicism and discontent apart from his kind. Such in rough outline is the figure the poet has sketched as the foundation and centre of his plan * * *. Since the days of his early youth up to the period when the immediate action of the poem is supposed to commence, the dreamy recluse has seen nothing of the family of the man to whom circumstances have inclined him to attribute his misfortunes. This individual, although since his accession to prosperity the possessor of the neighbouring hall and of the manorial lands of the village, has been residing abroad. Just at this time however there are workmen up at the dark old place, and a rumour spreads that the absentees are about to return. This rumour, as a matter of course, stirs up afresh

rankling memories in the breast of the recluse, and reawakens there old griefs. But with the group of associated recollections that come crowding forth, there is one of the child Maud, who was in happier days his merry playfellow. She will now however be a child no longer. She will return as the lady mistress of the mansion (being the only daughter of the Squire, who is a widower). What will she be like? He, who wonders, has heard somewhere that she is singularly beautiful. But what is this to him? Even while he thinks of her, he feels a chill presentiment, suggested no doubt by her close relationship to one who he considered had already worked him so much harm, that she will bring with her a curse for him.”

I shall never forget his last reading¹ of “Maud,” on August 24th, 1892. He was sitting in his high-backed chair, fronting a southern window which looks over the groves and yellow cornfields of Sussex toward the long line of South Downs that stretches from Arundel to Hastings (his high-domed Rembrandt-like head outlined against the sunset-clouds seen through the western window). His voice, low and calm in everyday life, capable of delicate and manifold inflection, but with “organ-tones” of great power and range, thoroughly brought out the drama of the poem. You were at once

¹ He owned that “Some of the passages are hard to read because they have to be taken in one breath and require good lungs.”

put in sympathy with the hero. As he said himself, "This poem is a little *Hamlet*," the history of a morbid poetic soul, under the blighting influence of a recklessly speculative age. He is the heir of madness, an egotist with the makings of a cynic, raised to sanity by a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature, passing from the height of triumph to the lowest depth of misery, driven into madness by the loss of her whom he has loved, and, when he has at length passed through the fiery furnace, and has recovered his reason, giving himself up to work for the good of mankind through the unselfishness born of his great passion. My father pointed out that even Nature at first presented herself to the man in sad visions.

And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands
drove thro' the air.

The "blood-red heath" too is an exaggeration of colour; and his suspicion that all the world is against him is as true to his nature as the mood when he is "fantastically merry." "The peculiarity of this poem," my father added, "is that different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters."

The passion in the first Canto was given by my father in a sort of rushing recitative through the long sweeping lines of satire and invective against the greed for money, and of horror at the consequences of the war of the hearth.

Then comes the first sight of Maud, and
“visions of the night,” and in Canto iv. a longing
for calm, the reaction after a mood of bitterness,
and yearning for

A philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways.

But the clarion call of the “voice by the
cedar tree” singing

A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
awakens a love in the heart which revolutionizes
and inspires the whole life. In Canto xi. my
father expressed the longing for love in

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet :

in Canto xvii. the exultation of love, knowing
that it is returned :

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields.

But this blessedness is so intense that it
borders on sadness, and my father's voice would
break down when he came to

I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
There is none like her, none.

Joy culminates in “Come into the garden,
Maud,” and my father's eyes, which were
through the other love-passages veiled by his
drooping lids, would suddenly flash as he looked

up and spoke these words, the passion in his voice deepening in the last words of the stanza.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead ;
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

Then we heard after the duel the terrible wail of agony and despair in

 The fault was mine,
 and the depth of forlorn misery in
 Courage, poor heart of stone !

when the man feels that he is going mad, both read with slow solemnity : then the delirious madness of

 O me, why have they not buried me deep enough ?

The lyrics in "Maud" which my father himself liked best were

 I have led her home,
 and O that 'twere possible,
 and Courage, poor heart of stone !

About the mad-scene one of the best-known doctors for the insane wrote that it was “the most faithful representation of madness since Shakespeare.”

It is notable that two such appreciative critics as Mr. Gladstone and Dr. Van Dyke wholly misapprehended the meaning of “Maud” until they heard my father read it, and that they both then publicly recanted their first criticisms. “No one but a noble-minded man would have done that” my father would say of Mr. Gladstone. Dr. Van Dyke’s recantation he did not live to read.¹

Mr. Gladstone’s recantation runs thus :

I can now see, and I at once confess, that a feeling, which had reference to the growth of the war-spirit in the outer world at the date of this article (*Quarterly Review*, 1855), dislocated my frame of mind, and disabled me from dealing even tolerably with the work as a work of imagination. Whether it is to be desired that a poem should require from common men a good deal of effort in order to comprehend it ; whether all that is put into the mouth of the Soliloquist in “Maud” is within the lines of poetical verisimilitude, whether this poem has the full moral equilibrium which is so marked a characteristic of the sister-works ; are questions open, perhaps, to discussion. But I have neither

¹ When Fanny Kemble heard that my father read his “Maud” finely, she wrote : “I do not think any reading of Tennyson’s can ever be as striking and impressive as that ‘Curse of Boadicea’ that he intoned to us, while the oak trees were writhing in the storm that lashed the windows and swept over Blackdown the day we were there.” [Unpublished MS.]

done justice in the text to its rich and copious beauties of detail, nor to its great lyrical and metrical power. And what is worse, I have failed to comprehend rightly the relation between particular passages in the poem and its general scope. This is, I conceive, not to set forth any coherent strain, but to use for poetical ends all the moods and phases allowable under the laws of the art, in a special form of character, which is impassioned, fluctuating and ill-grounded. The design, which seems to resemble that of the Ecclesiastes in another sphere, is arduous ; but Mr. Tennyson's power of execution is probably nowhere greater. Even as regards the passages devoted to war-frenzy, equity should have reminded me of the fine lines in the *latter* portion of x. 3 (Part I.), and of the emphatic words v. 10 (Part II.) :

I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

W. E. G. 1878.¹

Among the few who recognized merit in "Maud" were Henry Taylor, Jowett and the Brownings.

From Henry Taylor

COLONIAL OFFICE, LONDON,
31st July, 1855.

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

I thank you much for sending me "Maud." I have only read it twice, but I have already a strong feeling of what it is. I say a feeling and not an opinion, for I am always disposed to have as little as possible to say to opinions in matters poetical. I felt the passion

¹ Gladstone's *Gleanings*, vol. ii.

of it and the poetic spirit that is in it, and the poetic spirit that it seemed in some measure to bring back unto me. I am glad that there is some one living who can do me that service and glad that you are he.

Ever yours sincerely, H. TAYLOR.

In December Jowett writes :

I want to tell you how greatly I admire “Maud.” No poem since Shakespeare seems to show equal power of the same kind, or equal knowledge of human nature. No modern poem contains more lines that ring in the ears of men. I do not know any verse out of Shakespeare in which the ecstasy of love soars to such a height.

He adds that the critics have “confused the hero with the author.”¹

Some of the reviews accused him of loving war, and urging the country to war, charges

¹ I take from Dr. Mann, with some condensation, the following remarks about “Maud,” because in the light of present criticism they are curious. “One member of the fraternity of critics immediately pronounced the poem to be a ‘spasm,’ another acutely discovered that it was a ‘careless, visionary, and unreal allegory of the Russian War.’ A third could not quite make up his mind whether the adjective ‘mud’ or ‘mad’ would best apply to the work, but thought, as there was only one small vowel redundant in the title in either case, both might do. A fourth found that the ‘mud’ concealed ‘irony’; and the fifth, leaning rather to the mad hypothesis, nevertheless held that the madness was only assumed as an excuse for pitching the tone of the poetry in ‘a key of extravagant sensibility.’ Others of the multifold judgments were of opinion that it was ‘a political fever,’ an ‘epidemic caught from the prevalent carelessness of thought and rambling contemplativeness of the time’; ‘obscurity mistaken for profundity,’ ‘the dead level of prose run mad’; ‘absurdity such as even partial friendship must blush to tolerate,’ ‘rampant and rabid bloodthirstiness of soul.’ These are but a few of the pleasant suggestions which critical

which he sufficiently answered in the "Epilogue to the Heavy Brigade," ending with these lines :

And here the singer for his Art
 Not all in vain may plead,
 "The song that nerves a nation's heart
 Is in itself a deed."

The truth is that though he advocated the war of defence and of liberty, and often said, "Peace at all price implies war at all cost," no one loathed war more than he did, or looked forward more passionately to the

Parliament of man, the Federation of the world, when the earth at last should be one.

A warless world, a single race, a single tongue,
 I have seen her far away, for is not Earth as yet so young?
 Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion kill'd,
 Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert till'd,

acumen brought forward as its explanations of the inspiration of numbers that must nevertheless be musical." *Maud Vindicated.*

One of the anonymous letters my father received he enjoyed repeating with a humorous intonation :

SIR, I used to worship you, but now I hate you. I loathe and detest you. You beast ! So you've taken to imitating Longfellow.
 Yours in aversion * * *.

Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she
smiles,
*Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles.*¹

What even his hero in “Maud” says is only that the sins of the nation, “civil war” as he calls them, are deadlier in their effect than what is commonly called war, and that they may be in a measure subdued by the war between nations which is an evil more easily recognized.

At first my father was nettled by these captious remarks of the “indolent reviewers,” but afterwards would take no notice of them, except to speak of them in a half-pitiful, half-humorous, half-mournful manner. About “Maud” and other monodramatic poems (the stories of which were his own creation) he said to me: “In a certain way, no doubt, poets and novelists, however dramatic they are, give themselves in their works. The mistake that people make is that they think the poet’s poems are a kind of ‘catalogue raisonné’ of his own very self, and of all the facts of his life, not seeing that they often only express a poetic instinct, or judgment on character real or imagined, and on the facts of lives real or imagined. Of course some poems, like my ‘Ode to Memory,’ are evidently based on the poet’s own nature, and on hints from his own life.”

¹ This line he held to be one of the best of the kind he had ever written.

The poem was first entitled "Maud or the Madness." My father thought that part of the misunderstanding of "Maud" had arisen from a misconception of the story, so left me the following MS. headings and notes.

PART I

Sections

- I. Before the arrival of Maud.
- II. First sight of Maud.
- III. Visions of the night. The broad-flung shipwrecking roar. In the Isle of Wight the roar can be heard nine miles away from the beach. (Many of the descriptions of Nature are taken from observations of natural phenomena at Farringford, although the localities in the poem are all imaginary.)
- IV. Mood of bitterness after fancied disdain.
- V. He fights against his growing passion.
- VI. First interview with Maud.
- VII. He remembers his own and her father talking just before the birth of Maud.
- VIII. That she did not return his love.
- IX. First sight of the young lord.

X. The *Westminster Review* said this was an attack on John Bright. I did not know at the time that he was a Quaker. (It was not against Quakers but against peace-at-all-price men that the hero fulminates.)

XI. This was originally verse III. but I omitted it.

Will she smile if he presses her hand,
This lord-captain up at the Hall ?
Captain ! he to hold a command !
He can hold a cue, he can pocket a ball ;
And sure not a bantam cockerel lives
With a weaker crow upon English land,
Whether he boast of a horse that gains,
Or cackle his own applause. . . .

What use for a single mouth to rage
At the rotten creak of the State-machine ;
Tho' it makes friends weep and enemies
 smile,
That here in the face of a watchful age,
The sons of a gray-beard-ridden isle
Should dance in a round of an old routine.

XII. Interview with Maud.

“ Maud, Maud, Maud ” is like the rook's
 caw.

“ Maud is here, here, here ” is like the
 call of the little birds.

- XIII. Mainly prophetic. He sees Maud's brother who will not recognize him.
- XVI. He will declare his love.
- XVII. Accepted.
- XVIII. Happy. The sigh in the cedar branches seems to chime in with his own yearning.
- “*Sad astrology*” is modern astronomy, for of old astrology was thought to sympathize with and rule man's fate.
- Not die but live a life of truest breath.*
- This is the central idea, the holy power of Love.
- XXI. Before the Ball.
- XXII. In the Hall-Garden.

PART II

Sections

- I. The Phantom (after the duel with Maud's brother).
- II. In Brittany. The shell undestroyed amid the storm perhaps symbolizes to him his own first and highest nature preserved amid the storms of passion.
- III. He felt himself going mad.

IV. Haunted after Maud's death.

“O that 'twere possible” appeared first in the “*Tribute*.” Sir John Simeon years after begged me to weave a story round this poem and so “Maud” came into being.

V. In the mad-house.

The second corpse is Maud's brother, the lover's father being the first corpse, whom the lover thinks that Maud's father has murdered.

PART III

VI. Sane but shattered. Written when the cannon was heard booming from the battle-ships in the Solent before the Crimean War.

Letters to and from friends, 1854-55

To Gerald Massey

FRESHWATER, I. OF WIGHT,
April 1st, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,

In consequence of my change of residence I did not receive your captivating volume till yesterday. I am no reader of papers and Reviews, and I had not seen nor even heard of

any of your poems : my joy was all the fresher and the greater in thus suddenly coming on a poet of such fine lyrical impulse, and of so rich half-oriental an imagination. It must be granted that you make our good old English tongue crack and sweat for it occasionally, but time will chasten all that. Go on and prosper, and believe me grateful for your gift, and

Yours most truly, A. TENNYSON.

Letters to Dr. Mann, author of "Maud Vindicated"

1855.

Thanks for your *Vindication*. No one with this essay before him can in future pretend to misunderstand my dramatic poem, "Maud" : your commentary is as true as it is full, and I am really obliged to you for defending me against the egregiously nonsensical imputation of having attacked the Quakers or Mr. Bright : you are not aware, perhaps, that another wiseacre accused me of calling Mr. Layard an "Assyrian Bull !"

Yours very truly, A. TENNYSON.

Without the prestige of Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (if it came out now) would be treated in just the same way, so that one ought not to care for their cackling, not that I am comparing poor little "Maud" to the Prince, except as, what's the old quotation out of Virgil, *sic parvis componere, etc.* Would it not be better that all literary criticisms

should be signed with the name or at least the initials of the writer? To sign political articles would be perhaps unadvisable and inconvenient, but my opinion is that we shall never have a good school of criticism in England while the writer is anonymous and irresponsible.

Believe me yours ever, A. T.

I am delighted with Miss Sewell's gift,¹ tho' yet unseen. I should like as I have told her to learn something of the history of the naming of it: can you tell me anything? Please get it framed, we shall be half a year getting it done here. I think it should not have a great white margin except the artist herself desires it. Perhaps the lake was not called after your humble servant but another. I enclose you the note to Miss Sewell which please deliver and read if you choose.

A. T.

I wished for you much yesterday. Merwood² brought me a lump of snake's eggs, and I picked carefully out two little embryo snakes with bolt-ing eyes and beating hearts. I laid them on a piece of white paper. Their hearts or blood-vessels beat for at *least* two hours after extraction. Does not that in some way explain why it is so

¹ Miss Sewell had painted a picture of Lake Tennyson in New Zealand, so named by Sir Frederick Weld.

² Tenant at Farringford farm.

very difficult to kill a snake? I was so sorry not to have you and your microscope here.

A. T.

*From Mrs. Vyner, a stranger*¹

RIVER, NEW SOUTH WALES, 1855.

DEAR FRIEND,

I know that the poet's life must have its commonplace daily sorrows and toils and that there must be moments when he even doubts his own gift, but I fancy a poet's heart must be so large and loving that he can feel for and forgive even folly. Folly it may be, and yet I *must* write and thank you with a true and grateful heart for the happy moments your thoughts and your pen have given me. I am in the wildest bush of Australia, far away from all that makes life beautiful and endurable excepting the strong and stern sense of duty, the consciousness that where God has placed us is our lot to be, and that our most becoming posture is to accept our destiny with grateful humility. You must let me tell you how in a lonely home among the mountains, with my young children asleep, my husband absent, no sound to be heard but the cry of the wild dog or the wail of the curlew, no lock or bolt to guard our solitary hut, strong in our utter helplessness I have turned (next to God's book) to you as a friend, and read far into the night till my lot seemed light and a joy seemed cast around my very menial toils: then I have said, "God bless the poet and put still some beautiful words and thoughts into his heart," and the

¹ My father was deeply touched by this letter: and kept it among the things he most prized.

burthen of life became pleasant to me or at least easy. If you are the man I feel you must be you will forgive this address: there are certain impulses which seem irresistible, and I believe these are the genuine, truthful moments of our life, and such an impulse has urged me to write to you, and I know that the blessing of a faithful heart cannot be bootless: and may He who seeth not as man seeth spare you to plead the cause of truth and to spurn foolish saws and sickly conventionalities. Farewell.

God bless you : always your friend,
MARGARET ANNA VYNER.

My father's aunt Mrs. Russell was vexed at what she thought an attack on coal-mine owners in "Maud," and so he writes: "I really could find it in my heart to be offended with such an imputation, for what must you think of me if you think me capable of such gratuitous and unmeaning personality and hostility? I am as sensitive a person as exists, and sooner than wound any one in such a spiteful fashion, would consent never to write a line again; yea, to have my hand cut off at the wrist. Why, if you had the least suspicion that I had acted in this way, did you not inquire of me before? Now see, you the kindest and tenderest of human beings, how you have wronged me, and nourished in your heart this accusation as baseless, no, more baseless, than a dream, for dreams have some little foundation in past things: but pray put it all out of your head."

To George Brimley

FRESHWATER, I.W.

Nov. 28th, 1855.

SIR,

I wish to assure you that I quite close with your commentary on "Maud." I may have agreed with portions of other critiques on the same poem, which have been sent to me ; but when I saw your notice I laid my finger upon it and said, "There, that is my meaning." Poor little "Maud," after having run the gauntlet of so much brainless abuse and anonymous spite, has found a critic. Therefore believe her father (not the gray old wolf) to be

Yours not unthankfully, A. TENNYSON.

P.S. But there are two or three points in your comment to which I should take exception, *e.g.* "The writer of the fragments, etc.," surely the speaker or the thinker rather than the writer ; again, as to the character of the love, do any of the expressions "rapturous," "painful," "childish," however they may apply to some of the poems, fully characterize the 18th ? is it not something deeper ? but perhaps some day I may discuss these things with you, and therefore I will say no more here, except that I shall be very glad to see you if ever you come to the Isle of Wight.

To F. G. Tuckerman

1855.

DEAR MR. TUCKERMAN,

I have just returned home (*i.e.* to Farringford) from a visit to London, during which I called on Moxon, and found your kind present of books waiting for me. I fear that you must have thought me neglectful in not immediately acknowledging them: and so I should have done had I not been waiting to send along with my thanks a small volume of my own, containing some of the things I repeated to you in my little smoking-attic here. These poems, when printed, I found needed considerable elision and so the book has hung on hand.

When I arrived here I found that my small smoking-room did not smell of smoke at all, nay was even fragrant. I could not at first make it out. At last I perceived it was owing to the Russian leather on your Webster which you made mine. Even so (as some one says),

"The actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust"—

and there was dust enough on the table almost to justify the application.

You will find in my little volume "The Charge of the Light Brigade." * * * It is

not a poem on which I pique myself, but I cannot help fancying that, such as it is, I have improved it.

Farewell and forgive my silence hitherto. I shall always remember with pleasure your coming to see me in the frost and our pleasant talk together. Did you see in your paper that the Oxford University would make me a Doctor the other day, and how the young men shouted?

I am, dear Mr. Tuckerman,

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.

*To the Rev. G. G. Bradley*¹

FARRINGFORD,

August 25th, 1855.

DEAR MR. BRADLEY,

Many thanks for the Arnold: nobody can deny that he is a poet. "The Merman" was an old favourite of mine, and I like him as well as ever. "The Scholar Gipsy" is quite new to me, and I have already an affection for him, which I think will increase. There are several others which seem very good, so that altogether I may say that you have conferred a great boon upon me. I have received a Scotch paper, in which it is stated that poor "Maud" is to be slashed all to pieces by that mighty man,

¹ Dean of Westminster.

LETTERS ON "MAUD," ETC. 1855

that pompholygous, broad-blown Apollodorus, the gifted X. Her best friends do not expect her to survive it !

I am yours very truly,
A. TENNYSON.

From J. Ruskin

DENMARK HILL, 12th November, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hear of so many stupid and feelingless misunderstandings of "Maud" that I think it may perhaps give you some little pleasure to know my sincere admiration of it throughout.

I do not like its versification so well as much of your other work, not because I do not think it good of its kind, but because I do not think that wild kind quite so good, and I am sorry to have another cloud put into the sky of one's thoughts by the sad story, but as to the general bearing and delicate finish of the thing in its way, I think no admiration can be extravagant.

It is a compliment to myself, not to you, if I say that I think with you in *all* things about the war.

I am very sorry you put the "Some one had blundered" out of the "Light Brigade."¹

It was precisely the most tragical line in the poem. It is as true to its history as essential to its tragedy.

Believe me sincerely yours, J. RUSKIN.

¹ Some friends of excellent critical judgment prevailed upon him to omit this phrase which was however soon re-inserted : for it was originally the keynote of the poem.

From Herbert Spencer (about "The Two Voices")

7 MARLBOROUGH GARDENS,
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, LONDON, 1855.

SIR,

I happened recently to be re-reading your Poem "The Two Voices," and coming to the verse

Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

it occurred to me that you might like to glance through a book which applies to the elucidation of mental science, the hypothesis to which you refer. I therefore beg your acceptance of *Psychology* which I send by this post.

With much sympathy yours,
HERBERT SPENCER.

With the proceeds of the sale of "Maud" Farringford was bought, and my mother's journal says:

April 24th, 1856. This morning a letter came from Mr. G. S. Venables saying that Mr. Chapman pronounced the title of Farringford good. We have agreed to buy, so I suppose this ivied home among the pine-trees is ours. Went to our withy holt: such beautiful blue hyacinths, orchises, primroses, daisies, marsh-marigolds and cuckoo-flowers. Wild cherry trees too with single snowy blossom, and the hawthorns white with their "pearls of May."

The park has for many days been rich with cowslips and furze in bloom. The elms are a golden wreath at the foot of the down ; to the north of the house the mespilus and horse-chestnut are in flower and the apple-trees are covered with rosy buds. A. dug the bed ready for the rhododendrons. A thrush was singing among the nightingales and other birds, as he said "mad with joy." At sunset, the golden green of the trees, the burning splendour of Blackgang Chine and St. Catharine's, and the red bank of the primeval river, contrasted with the turkis-blue of the sea (that is our view from the drawing-room), make altogether a miracle of beauty. We are glad that Farringford is ours.

CHAPTER X

HOME LIFE AND "IDYLLS OF THE KING"

1856-1859

A thousand thanks for your charming letter from the Isle of Wight with suggestive date of Bonchurch (the only church you went to that day), and the spirited outline sketch of the Idyllic Poet serenely ploughing his windy acres. How must you have enjoyed! . . . The "Idylls [of the King]" are a brilliant success. Rich tapestries, wrought as only Tennyson could have done them, and worthy to hang by the *Faerie Queen*. I believe there is no discordant voice on this side of the water.

(From H. W. Longfellow to James T. Fields, 1854.)

1856

My father went to the Grange (Lord Ashburton's) in January, and met the Carlyles, Venables, Brookfields, Tom Taylors, Goldwin Smith and Spedding. Brookfield wrote: "Alfred has been most cheerful and the life of the party." The note by my father is: "It seems a house not uneasy to live in, only I regret my little fumitory at Farringford. Here they smoke among the oranges, lemons, and camellias. . . . I cannot see in Lady Ashburton a touch of the

haughtiness which fame attributes to her. She is most perfectly natural, tho' like enough she sometimes snubs her own grade now and then, when she sees presumption and folly. But as Brookfield said this morning, 'She is very loyal to her *printers*.'"

During the winter evenings of 1855 my father would translate the *Odyssey* aloud into Biblical prose to my mother, who writes, "Thus I get as much as it is possible to have of the true spirit of the original."

He had been evolving the main scheme of the "Idylls of the King" at different periods during the last twenty years and more: the Morte d'Arthur episode had appeared in the volume of 1842. He resumed the plan with "Merlin and Nimuë" (called "Vivien") in February; and in the "Forest of Broceliande" are many reminiscences of what was now the near scenery of the New Forest.¹ This Idyll was finished by March 31st, and "Geraint and Enid" begun on April 16th.

Meantime for daily exercise he planted trees and shrubs; rolled the lawn and dug in the kitchen garden, taking all the while a loving note of Nature. Thus as he was digging one day a well-known line formed itself:

As careful robins eye the delver's toil.

¹ On one occasion he stayed in the New Forest with his friend, the well-known ornithologist, Lord Lilford, in order to observe the bird-life there.

Farringford being now his property, the Twickenham furniture was brought over to the new home. As it was unpacked, my father's eye was struck by a certain crimson-covered sofa and some oak chairs grouped together in the farmyard in front of the old thatched farmstead and the ivy-covered wall through which the kitchen garden is entered. "What a picture it would make!" he said; repeating his new song in "Enid," that then for the first time came to him:

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the
proud.

Presently, within doors, while the books were being sorted and rearranged, all imaginable things strewn over the drawing-room floor, and the chairs and tables in wild disarray, Prince Albert called. He had driven over suddenly from Osborne. The parlour-maid went to the front door, heard the Prince's name announced, and, being bewildered and not knowing into what room to show him, stood stock still; so the Equerry, I have been told, took her by the shoulders and turned her round, bidding her lead them in. The Prince expressed great admiration of the view from the drawing-room window, and one of the party gathered a bunch of cowslips which H.R.H. said he must take to the Queen.

From the first the Prince was very cordial, and impressed my father as being a man of strong and self-sacrificing nature.

In June news came that R.'s bank would probably break and that all my father's little savings might be lost. On July 2nd my mother wrote: "A. showed a noble disregard of money, much as the loss would affect us." That evening, so as to give her courage, he asked her to play and sing the grand Welsh national air, "Come to battle": and afterwards, to divert themselves from dwelling on the possible loss, they hung their Michael Angelo engravings round the drawing-room.

In July and August my father and mother took us children to Wales, and here "Enid" was all but finished. We stayed at Llangollen, then at Dolgelly, and at Barmouth. My father spoke of "the high rejoicing lines of Cader Idris." My mother wrote: "*Sept. 8th.* A. climbed Cader Idris. Pouring rain came on. I and the children waited a long time for him. I heard the roar of waters, streams and cataracts, and I never saw anything more awful than that great veil of rain drawn straight over Cader Idris, pale light at the lower edge. It looked as if death were behind it, and made me shudder when I thought he was there. A message came from him by the guide that he had gone to Dolgelly."

It was near Festiniog that he heard the roar

of a cataract above the roar of the torrent, and wrote that Virgilian simile :

For as one,
That listens near a torrent mountain-brook,
All thro' the crash of the near cataract hears
The drumming thunder of the huger fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear
His voice in battle.

He particularly admired the still pools of the torrent in the "Torrent Walk" at Dolgelly, and the mysterious giant steps of Cwm Bychan. Harlech, Festiniog, Llanidloes, Builth, Caerleon were the next halting-places ; and on September 16th he wrote : "The Usk murmurs by the windows, and I sit like King Arthur in Caerleon. This is a most quiet, half-ruined village of about 1500 inhabitants with a little museum of Roman tombstones and other things." From Caerleon he made expeditions to Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydvil, Raglan ; and then we all returned by Brecon, Gloucester and Salisbury home. With the help of local schoolmasters in Wales my parents had learned some Welsh, and now read together the *Hanes Cymru* (Welsh History), the *Mabinogion* and *Llywarch Hen*.

On Dec. 31st a characteristic letter was sent to a stranger who had forwarded a volume of verse :

I have as you desired considered your poem,

and though I make it a rule to decline passing any judgment on poems, I cannot in this instance refrain from giving you a word of advice.

Follow your calling diligently, for be assured, work, far from being a hardship, is a blessing, and if you are a poet indeed, you will find in it a help not a hindrance. You might, if you chose, offer these lines to some magazine, but you must not be surprised if they are refused, for the poetic gift is so common in these days that hundreds must have to endure this disappointment, and I should not be an honest friend if I did not prepare you for that.

I should by no means recommend you to risk the publication of a volume on your own account. The publication of verse is almost always attended with loss. As an amusement to yourself and your friends, the writing it is all very well. Accept my good wishes and believe me,

Your obedient servant,

A. TENNYSON.

1857

An invitation was sent in January to Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle. The latter answered :

5 CHEYNE ROAD, CHELSEA,
21st January, 1857.

MY DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

You *are* a darling woman to have gone and written to me on the "voluntary principle" such a

kind little note! *You* to have been at the trouble to know that *I* was ill! *You* to express regret at *my* illness. I feel both surprised and gratified, as if I were an *obsolete* word that some great Poet (Alfred Tennyson for example) had taken a notion to look up in the Dictionary.

In *London*, when one is sick, especially when one continues sick for three months, one falls so out of thought! it is much if even your female friend, in the next street, do not weary of you and then forget you! I say female advisedly for, to give the Devil his due, I find that men hold out longer than women against the loss of one's "powers of pleasing."

Now however I begin to be about: and have no longer the pretext of illness for straining what Mr. Carlyle calls "the inestimable privilege of being as ugly and stupid and disagreeable as ever one likes!" and my friends drop in more frequently and sit much longer!

The heartiest thanks for your invitation to Fresh-water.

Wouldn't I like to go and visit you if that man would leave his eternal *Frederick* and come along! nay wouldn't I like to go on my own small basis, if only I had the *nerve* for it, which I have not yet! *He* goes nowhere, sees nobody, only for two hours a day he rides, like the wild German Hunter, on a horse he has bought, and which seems to like the sort of thing! Such a horse! he (not the horse) never wearies, in the intervals of *Frederick*, of celebrating the creature's "good sense, courage and sensibility!" "Not once," he says, "has the creature shown the slightest disagreement from *him* in *any question of Intellect*" (more than can be said of most living Bipedes)! I wrote to a relation in Scotland, "If this horse of Mr. C.'s dies, he will certainly write its biography," and that very day he

said to me, "My dear, I wish I could find out about the genealogy of that horse of mine! and some particulars of its life! I am beginning to feel sure it is a Cockney."

Poor Lady Ashburton has made nothing by leaving the Grange deserted this winter, she has been quite ill ever since she went to Nice.

May I offer my affectionate regards to your husband?
And may I give yourself a kiss?

Yours very truly,

JANE WELSH CARLYLE.

The two Idylls "Enid and Nimuë,"¹ the True and the False" were put into print during the early summer.

In June the American translator of *Faust*, Bayard Taylor, stayed at Farringford and was full of talk. Among other things he told my father that the most beautiful sight in the world was a Norwegian forest in winter, sheathed in ice, the sun rising over it and making the whole landscape one rainbow of flashing diamonds.

Taylor published the following account of his visit to us:

As we drew near Freshwater, my coachman pointed out Farringford, a cheerful gray country mansion with a small thick-grassed park before it, a grove behind, and beyond all, a deep shoulder of the chalk downs, a gap in which, at Freshwater, showed the dark blue horizon of the Channel. Leaving my luggage at one of the two little inns, I walked to the house, with lines from "Maud" chiming in my mind. "The dry-tongued laurel" shone glossily in the sun, the cedar

¹ Now Merlin and Vivien.

“sighed for Lebanon” on the lawn, and “the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea” glimmered afar. I had not been two minutes in the drawing-room before Tennyson walked in. So unlike are the published portraits of him, that I was almost in doubt as to his identity. The engraved heads suggest a moderate stature, but he is tall and broad-shouldered as a son of Anak, with hair, beard and eyes of southern darkness. Something in the lofty brow and aquiline nose suggests Dante, but such a deep mellow chest-voice never could have come from Italian lungs. He proposed a walk, as the day was wonderfully clear and beautiful. We climbed the steep comb of the chalk cliff, and slowly wandered westward till we reached the Needles, at the extremity of the Island and some three or four miles from his residence. During the conversation with which we beguiled the way, I was struck with the variety of his knowledge. Not a little flower on the downs, which the sheep had spared, escaped his notice, and the geology of the coast, both terrestrial and submarine, was perfectly familiar to him. I thought of a remark I once heard from the lips of a distinguished English author [Thackeray], that “Tennyson was the wisest man he knew,” and could well believe that he was sincere in making it. I shall respect the sanctity of the delightful family circle to which I was admitted, and from which I parted the next afternoon with true regret. Suffice it to say that the poet is not only happy in his family relations, but that, with his large and liberal nature, his sympathies for what is true and noble in humanity, and his depth and tenderness of feeling he deserves to be so.

July 9th. My mother writes in her journal :
 “A. has brought me as a birthday present the

first two lines that he has made of 'Guinevere' which might be the nucleus of a great poem. Arthur is parting from Guinevere and says :

'But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side ; see thee no more :
Farewell ! '”

July 25th. The following letter was received from Mr. Ruskin about the edition of the *Poems* illustrated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt and others, in which my father had taken great interest, having called on most of the artists so as to give them his views of what the illustrations ought to be.

EDINBURGH,
July 24th, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is a long time since I have heard from you and I do not like the mildew to grow over what little memory you may have of me.

It is however no excuse for writing to say that I wanted to congratulate you on the last edition of your poems. Indeed it might be and I hope will be some day better managed, still many of the plates are very noble things, though not, it seems to me, illustrations of your poems.

I believe in fact that good pictures never can be ; they are always another poem, subordinate but wholly different from the poet's conception, and serve chiefly to show the reader how variously the same verses may affect various minds. But these woodcuts will be of much use in making people think and puzzle a little ;

art was getting quite a matter of form in book-illustrations, and it does not so much matter whether any given vignette is right or not, as whether it contains thought or not, still more whether it contains any kind of plain facts. If people have no sympathy with St. Agnes, or if people as soon as they get a distinct idea of a living girl who probably got scolded for dropping her candle-wax about the convent-stairs, and caught cold by looking too long out of the window in her bedgown, feel no true sympathy with her, they can have no sympathy in them.

But we P. R. B.s¹ must do better for you than this some day : meantime I do congratulate you on "The wind is blowing in turret and tree," and Rossetti's Sir Galahad and Lady of Shalott, and one or two more.

Please send me a single line to Denmark Hill, Camberwell, and believe me

Faithfully yours,
J. RUSKIN.

This summer the tour was to Manchester, Coniston, Inverary Castle, and Carstairs (the home of my father's college friend Monteith). On this journey he read aloud *Tom Brown's School-Days* to my mother, enjoying it thoroughly.

When at Manchester my parents heard Dickens recite his *Christmas Carol*.

A visit was made to the Exhibition held there, and much time spent in studying Holman Hunt's pictures, the Turner sketches, Mulready's drawings, and various fine Gainsboroughs and Reynolds.

¹ Pre-Raphaelite Brothers.

Hawthorne was in the same room, and my father afterwards expressed great regret that he had not been introduced to the author of *The Scarlet Letter*. Hawthorne wrote: "Gazing at him with all my eyes I liked him well, and rejoiced more in him than in all the wonders of the Exhibition."

After the tour Mrs. Browning wrote to enquire after his health :

ALLA VILLA TOSCANA,
BAGNI DI LUCCA,
September 6th, 1857.

MY DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

We see in the *Galignani* that Mr. Tennyson is not well, by the side of threats of fall of our Indian empire and other disasters; and it disquiets us to the point that I must write to ask you whether it is true or not and how far? The trade of newspapers is to blow bubbles, and a little breath more or less determines the size of the bubble.

May this be a mere bubble! write one word to say so. Oh may you be able to smile at my question from over the sea!

But remember we have lost our friend, your brother Frederick, from whom we could always hear about you! He has devastated our Florence for us by going to live at Pisa; and now he is farther off still, at Genoa, while we are mountain-locked here with no news from anybody.

The spring and summer have been heavy to me from a family grief,¹ but we three are well, thank God, living

¹ Death of her father.

quietly in the shade till the sun shall have done his worst and best alas! in this beautiful Italy. Little Penini¹ is very happy, gossiping with the Contadini, among whom he passes for un Vero Fiorentino, though he talks English inside the house as fast as Italian out of it. I hope that one day he may know your boys. How sorry I was to leave England last year without seeing them or you, or "King Arthur"!

My husband made me envious by the advantage he had over me in having listened to a certain exquisite music of which I could only dream.

Just before we left Florence to come hither, we saw your brother Frederick who went there for a day or two. We thought we never saw him looking so well. It was provoking to hear, very provoking; but he maintained that he *slept* at Pisa as he never could at Florence. I was very cross, and inclined to retort that at Pisa one slept by day as well as by night, the place was so dull.

Think of our loss having to lose him!

Dear Mrs. Tennyson, will you send me just a few words? Really we are anxious. Being in all affection to both of you, his and yours,

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING
& R. B.

A letter came about this time from Colonel Phipps, saying that the Queen desired that a stanza should be added to *God save the Queen* for a concert to be given at Buckingham Palace on the evening of the Princess Royal's wedding-day. These two stanzas were sent in answer, and published in the *Times*, January 26th, 1858:

¹ Familiar name of their son.

God bless our Prince and Bride !
 God keep their lands allied,
 God save the Queen !
 Clothe them with righteousness,
 Crown them with happiness,
 Them with all blessings bless,
 God save the Queen.

Fair fall this hallow'd hour,
 Farewell our England's flower,
 God save the Queen !
 Farewell, fair rose of May !
 Let both the peoples say,
 God bless thy marriage-day,
 God bless the Queen.

For the last few months the Indian Mutiny had excited the profoundest interest throughout the country, and on Christmas Day the account of the relief of Lucknow arrived. Havelock's death, which had occurred on Nov. 25th, was not then known. When this sad news came, my father wrote the following lines :

Havelock. Nov. 25th, 1857. (Unpublished)

Bold Havelock march'd,
 Many a mile went he,
 Every mile a battle,
 Every battle a victory.

Bold Havelock march'd,
Charged with his gallant few,
Ten men fought a thousand,
Slew them and overthrew.

Bold Havelock march'd,
Wrought with his hand and his head,
March'd and thought and fought,
March'd and fought himself dead.

Bold Havelock died,
Tender and great and good,
And every man in Britain
Says "I am of Havelock's blood!"

1858

In January "The Parting of Arthur and Guinevere" was finished and my mother records her first impression—"It is awe-inspiring." On March 5th the entry in her journal is: "To-day he has written his song of 'Too Late,' and has said it to me"; and on March 15th, "'Guinevere' is finally completed."

My father then occasionally wrote in his new summer-house looking towards the down and the sea; and on the windows of which he was painting marvellous dragons and sea-serpents. "One day" (she says), "while writing his 'Guinevere,' A. spoke of 'the want of reverence now-a-days for great men, whose brightness, like

that of the luminous bodies in the Heaven, makes the dark spaces look the darker.'"

At this time he sent a letter to Dr. Mann in Natal :

Our winter has been the mildest I have ever known. I read of ripe pomegranates hanging on a houseside at Bath, and I myself counted scores of our wild summer roses on a hedge near, flourishing in December and lasting on into January, tho' now gone, for the temperature has changed. They were perfectly fragrant, and I brought home a bouquet of them and put them in water. You ask after the farm? I cannot say that * * is going on satisfactorily, very niggard of manure in the fields and ever doing his best to reave me of my rent by working at little odd jobs as a set off, so that at the end of the year, all things deducted, I get almost nothing. I am now building a little summer-house to catch the southern sun in Maiden's Croft, if you remember what field that is. I shall sit there and bask in the sunbeams and think of you far south. How I should love to rove about that parklike scenery of which you give such a fascinating account !

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

P.S. I may tell you however that young Swinburne called here the other day with a college friend of his, and we asked him to dinner, and I thought him a very modest and intelligent

young fellow. Moreover I read him what you vindicated,¹ but what I particularly admired in him was that he did not press upon me any verses of his own. Good-bye. How desolate No. 7 B. T. must feel itself!

Several friends urged the immediate publication of the newly-written Idylls, among them Jowett, who says :

I have great pleasure in sending some books which I hope you will accept, the best books in the world (except the Bible), Homer and Plato.

I take the opportunity also of enclosing Lemprière's *Dictionary*. The price is 1s. 6d. The bookseller valued it so little that he offered to give me the book. I have added two or three other books which I thought you might like to see, the translation of the Vedas as a specimen of the oldest thing in the world, Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, which is just "the increasing purpose that through the ages runs" buried under a heap of categories. If you care to look at it will you turn to the pages I have marked at the beginning? It is a favourite book of mine. I do not feel certain of the impression it will make on any one else.

I also send you the latest and best work on Mythology, and Bunsen's new *Bibelbuch*, which, from the little I have read, seems to be an interesting and valuable introduction to Scripture. What a cartload of heavy literature! Do not trouble yourself to read or to send it back to me : I will carry it away some day myself.

¹ Later Swinburne writes : "'Maud' is the poem of the deepest charm and fullest delight, pathos and melody ever written, even by Mr. Tennyson."

I fear I have no news to tell you, and "the art of letter-writing" Dr. Johnson says "consists solely in telling news."

May I say a word about "mosquitoes"?¹ Any one who cares about you is deeply annoyed that you are deterred by them from writing or publishing. The feeling grows and brings in after years the still more painful and deeper feeling that they have prevented you from putting out half your powers. Nothing is so likely to lead to misrepresentation. Persons don't understand that sensitiveness is often combined with real manliness as well as great intellectual gifts, and they regard it as a sign of fear and weakness.

A certain man on a particular day has his stomach out of order and the stomach "getteth him up into the brain," and he calls another man "morbid." He is morbid himself and wants soothing words, and the whole world is morbid with dissecting and analysing itself and wants to be comforted and put together again. Might not this be the poet's office, to utter the "better voice" while Thackeray is uttering the worse one? I don't mean to blame Thackeray, for I desire to take the world as it is in this present age, crammed with self-consciousness, and no doubt Thackeray's views are of some value in the direction of anti-humbug.

But there is another note needed afterwards to show the good side of human nature and to condone its frailties which Thackeray will never strike. That note would be most thankfully received by the better part of the world.

Give my love to Hallam and Lionel. Tell Hallam I have put his letter "where I can always see it," and that I read every day about "Louise."

¹ Spiteful critics.

No more about "mosquitoes," I have bored you enough. With most kind regards to Mrs. Tennyson,

Ever yours truly,

B. JOWETT.

At this time Lord Dufferin wrote from Highgate, with a copy of his *Letters from High Latitudes*.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I am going to do a very bold thing, but in asking you to accept the accompanying book I hope you will consider I am only obeying an impulse I have felt for many many years, but to which until now I have never had any excuse for giving way.

For the first 20 years of my life I not only did not care for poetry, but to the despair of my friends absolutely disliked it, at least so much of it as until that time had fallen in my way. In vain my mother read to me Dryden, Pope, Byron, Young, Cowper and all the standard classics of the day, each seemed to me as distasteful as I had from early infancy found Virgil : and I shall never forget her dismay when at a literary dinner I was cross-examined as to my tastes, and blushinglly confessed before an Olympus of poets that I rather disliked poetry than otherwise.

Soon afterwards however I fell in with a volume of yours, and suddenly felt such a sensation of delight as I never experienced before. A new world seemed open to me, and from that day, by a constant study of your works, I gradually worked my way to a thorough appreciation of what is good in all kinds of authors.

Naturally enough I could not help feeling very grateful to the Orpheus whose music had made the

gate of poet-land fly open, and for years I longed to make your acquaintance. Now that I have done so I cannot help wishing to make you a little thank-offering as a token of my sense of what I owe to you, and however insignificant, I trust you will accept it as being the best and only thing I have to give.

Ever yours sincerely, DUFFERIN.

April 8th. Professor Tyndall, Mr. Newman and Mr. Dicey called: my father said of Tyndall: "He is such a good fellow, so unscornful and genial, so full of imagination and of enthusiasm for his work!"

In July we stayed at Little Holland House, Kensington, with the Prinseps: and here my father began "The Fair Maid of Astolat" ("Lancelot and Elaine"), and read aloud "The Grandmother."

Watts was at work on what his friends called "the great moonlight portrait" of the Bard.

It was then that my father met Ruskin again. A voice from the corner of the room exclaimed: "Jones, you are gigantic." This was Ruskin apostrophizing Burne Jones as an artist.

From Little Holland House my father started on a trip to Norway, and he wrote in his Letter-Diary:

Started from Hull on July 23rd. Saw E. on board the little New Holland Steamer, and waved my handkerchief as both our boats were moving off: watched the two lights of Spurn Point till they became one star and then faded

away. Next day very fine but in the night towards morning storm arose and our topmast was broken off. I stood next morning a long time by the cabin door and watched the green sea looking like a mountainous country, far off waves with foam at the top looking like snowy mountains bounding the scene; one great wave, green-shining, past with all its crests smoking high up beside the vessel.¹ As I stood there came a sudden hurricane and roared drearily in the funnel for twenty seconds and past away.

Christiansand. Went up into the town and saw the wooden houses.

August 1st. Christiania. Magnificent seas on the way here. At Christiansand called on a Mr. Murch, and the Frau Murch gave me a splendid bouquet of flowers: arrived here at 6 this afternoon. I write this at the house of Mr. Crowe, consul, looking over the Sound—very pretty in the evening light. Am not quite certain whether I shall join Barrett and the other.

August 2nd. Christiania. I let Barrett and Tweedie go by themselves to Bergen. I am

¹ They couch'd their spears and prick'd their steeds, and thus,
Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,
Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
And him that helms it, so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger.

“Lancelot and Elaine.”

starting to-day to see the Riukan Foss with Mr. Woodfall, a very quiet sensible man, and we shall take our time. I have had great kindness from the Crowes. Yesterday a Norwegian introduced himself at the hotel, and began to spout my own verses to me; and I likewise rather to my annoyance found myself set down in the Christiania papers as "Den berömda engelske Digter."

I have seen the Riukan Foss. Magnificent power of water; weird blue light behind the fall.

On his return the Frederick Maurices visited us at Farringford. Mr. Maurice read family prayers in the morning, and my mother notes: "A. rejoiced as much as I did in his reading—'the most earnest and holiest reading,' A. said, 'he had ever heard.'"

In the evenings my father recited his new poems "The Grandmother" and "Sea Dreams,"¹ saying that the rascal in "Sea Dreams" was drawn from a man who had grossly cheated him in early life. Mr. Maurice was charmed with the place:

Groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand.

If his doctrine had been somewhat more within ordinary comprehension, my father was

¹ First published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Jan. 1860.

of opinion that he would have taken his place as foremost thinker among the Churchmen of our time. Consequently the following dedication of Maurice's *Theological Essays* gave him great pleasure.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have maintained in these *Essays* that a Theology which does not correspond to the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings cannot be a true Theology. Your writings have taught me to enter into many of these thoughts and feelings. Will you forgive me the presumption of offering you a book which at least acknowledges them and does them homage?

As the hopes which I have expressed in this volume are more likely to be fulfilled to our children than to ourselves, I might perhaps ask you to accept it as a present to one of your name, in whom you have given me a very sacred interest.¹ Many years, I trust, will elapse, before he knows that there are any controversies in the world into which he has entered. Would to God that in a few more he may find that they have ceased! At all events, if he should look into these *Essays*, they may tell him what meaning some of the former generation attached to words, which will be familiar and dear to his generation, and to those that follow his, how there were some who longed that the bells of our churches might indeed

Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly and gratefully,

F. D. MAURICE.

¹ See p. 167.

Two ideas which Maurice expressed my father would quote with approbation, that the "real Hell was the absence of God from the human soul, and that all religions seemed to him to be imperfect manifestations of the true Christianity."

I remember too his reading with admiration this passage from Maurice's *Friendship of Books*. "If I do not give you extracts from any of Milton's specially controversial writings, it is not that I wish to pass them over because the conclusions in them are often directly opposed to mine, for I think that I have learnt most from those that are so."

Oct. 4th. "To-day," my mother says, "A. took a volume of the *Morte d'Arthur* and read a noble passage about the battle with the Romans. He went to meet Mr. and Mrs. Roebuck at dinner at Swainston : and the comet was grand, with Arcturus shining brightly over the nucleus. At dinner he said he must leave the table to look at it and they all followed. They saw Arcturus seemingly dance as if mad¹ when it passed out of the comet's tail. He said of the comet's tail, 'It is like a besom of destruction sweeping the sky.' " When he returned next night he "observed the comet from his platform,² and, when he came down to tea, read some *Paradise Lost*."

¹ Alluded to in "Harold."

² The platform on the top of the house was a favourite place with him at night, and there he continually observed the stars.

Oct. 17th. He read aloud "The Rape of the Lock," and noted the marvellous skill of many of the couplets.

November. My father writes: "I have just seen Ruskin; he says that the Signor's (G. F. Watts') portrait of me is the grandest thing he has seen in that line, but so he said of (Woolner's) bust."¹

During these last months of the year he was full of the Queen's wise proclamation to India after the transference of the government from the Company to the Crown. The Indian Mutiny had stirred him to the depths.

Letters from the Rev. B. Jowett

Dec. 1858.

DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

We shall long remember your kind hospitality, which made the Easter Vacation a very happy time to us.

You asked me whether I could suggest any subjects for poetry. I have been so presumptuous as to think of some. I don't believe that poetical feelings and imagery on subjects can ever be exhausted. That is only a fancy which comes over us when our minds are dry or in moments of depression. This generation is certainly more poetical and imaginative than the last, and perhaps in spite of the critics the next may be more poetical than our own.

And as to the critics their power is not really great. Waggon-loads of them are lighting fires every week or on their way to the grocers.

¹ Now in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

I often fancy that the critical form of modern literature is like the rhetorical one which overlaid ancient literature and will be regarded as that is, at its true worth in after times. One drop of natural feeling in poetry or the true statement of a single new fact is already felt to be of more value than all the critics put together.

I suggested "old age" to Mr. Tennyson, a sort of "In Memoriam" over a lost child, wandering in soothing strains over all the thoughts and feelings of the aged. It always seems to me that "old age" has been badly treated by poets notwithstanding Burns' beautiful ballad. Its beauty, its sadness, its peace, its faded experience of life are good elements of poetry. An old lady once said to me quite simply, "The spirits of my children always seem to hover about me."¹ Might not something of the kind be expressed in verse? If it could, like "The May Queen," it would touch the chords of many hearts.

The 2 Sam. xix. 34, 35 is to me a very affecting passage.

I wish Mr. Tennyson could be persuaded to put the "Dogma of Immortality" to verse, not the fanciful hope of Immortality from "recollections of childhood," nor the conceptions of a future life derived from the imagery of Scripture such as are common in devotional poetry, but an heroic measure suited to manly minds embodying the deep ethical feeling which convinces us that the end of the Maker though dark is not here. I believe such a poem might be a possession for the world and better (what a bathos!) than ten thousand sermons.

Subjects like blackberries seem to me capable of

¹ My father had heard this saying before, and it was the germ of "The Grandmother."

being gathered off every hedge. (That shows the folly of suggesting what anybody can find for themselves anywhere.) I do not see why the Greek Mythology might not be the subject of a poem ; not Wordsworth's "Lively Grecian," but such as it is in the philosophical idea of it as the twilight of the human mind, which lingers still among forms of sense and is unable to pierce them.

Have not many sciences such as Astronomy or Geology a side of feeling which is poetry? No sight touches ordinary persons so much as a starlight night.

I think you once said to me that "Whole philosophies might be contained in a line of verse." Is it not true also that whole periods of history, seen by the light of modern ideas, admit of being described in short passages of poetry? Representative men such as Charlemagne or Hildebrand seem to me safer than the shadowy personages of the legends of romance. The Coronation of Charlemagne, and the scene of Hildebrand and the Emperor might help to form the situation. New friends or foes with old faces might occasionally peep out.

A representative from one of the Monastic orders similar in idea to St. Simeon Stylites and to be called St. Francis of Assisi, more Christian and less barbarous, would perhaps be possible.

Painters like to teach new lessons in nature. The successive phases of the human mind in different ages are subjects for poetry even more than for philosophy. Might not the poet teach many lessons of that sort, not in the æsthetical, artistic manner of Goethe but with simpler English poetic feeling?

Now I have said enough foolish things and will conclude. You will do me a great favour if you will let me know of any books that I can send Mr.

HOME LIFE AND "IDYLLS" 1858

Tennyson which you think may be useful or suggestive. Almost anything can be got here, or if you will tell me the subjects, I can find the books.

I hold most strongly that it is the duty of every one who has the good fortune to know a man of genius, to do any trifling service they can to lighten his work.

I will write to Mr. Tennyson in a few days. Remember me to him and

Believe me most truly yours,

B. JOWETT.

BALL. COLL.

Dec. 12th, 1858.

DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

I cannot but feel greatly ashamed of my ingratitude and disrespect in not having answered your last kind letter which gave me great pleasure at the time I received it. I believe that ingratitude is not the real cause (for that I could not possibly feel) but inveterate indolence about certain things, among which I fear come some of the duties of friendship.

You return me good for evil by sending me the two sweet letters of the children; which I recognize as most genuine productions. Give my love to the two "little birds." Lionel's epistle especially is just a picture of a child's mind.

I hope Mr. Tennyson is well and has good success in his great work.¹ Authors great and small have some trials in common and some joys when a "book is born into the world."

I think I have read somewhere a description of Burns' wife and child coming to meet him when he was in a sort of ecstasy, "with the tears rolling down his cheeks," writing "Tam o' Shanter" at the side of a

¹ The "Idylls of the King."

stream. That must be a great alleviation. I am sure it is only success (in the higher sense) and not resignation or philosophy that can make an author happy.

I do not doubt that the world will be charmed with the "Arthur Idylls." No malice will be able to prevent people from seeing that they are most beautiful poems. I have more hesitation (shall I go on?) about the other poem respecting the clerk and wife,¹ and could wish that the fortunes of it were tried alone so as not to interfere with the good-will towards "Arthur."

The scene and the satirical passage appear to me the doubtful points. It seems to me quite as fine as the "Idylls," but I speak with reference to its effect on the public.

You told me that I might suggest to you any subjects that I dreamed of. Did I mention "Jupiter Olympius," the statue of Phidias? The subject could partly be the Olympic games and the interest the Classical Greek feeling of the poem. But now I want to suggest something that would "express the thoughts of many hearts," which I must always think to be the highest excellence of poetry, and afford a solace where it is much needed. The subject I mean is "In Memoriam" for the dead in India. It might be done so as to include some scenes of Cawnpore and Lucknow; or quite simply and slightly, "Relatives in India," the schemings and hopings and imaginings about them, and the fatal missive suddenly announcing their death. They leave us in the fairness and innocence of youth, with nothing but the vision of their childhood and boyhood to look back upon, and return no more.

Perhaps you know what sets my thoughts upon this, the death of my dear brother, the second who has died in India. It matters nothing to the world, for they

¹ "Sea Dreams."

had never the opportunity of distinguishing themselves, but it matters a great deal to me. They were dear good disinterested fellows, most unselfish in their ways, and as grateful to me for what I did for them when they were boys, as if it had been yesterday. I like to think of them in the days of their youth busying themselves with engineering which was their great amusement. They were wonderfully attached to each other. The younger one especially, who died first about five years ago, was one of the sweetest dispositions I ever knew.

If I did not venture to look upon you and Mr. Tennyson as something like friends, I should not venture to trouble you with this sorrow about persons whom you have never seen or heard of.

I hope to have the pleasure of coming to see you about the 6th or 7th of January for a few days. But I could come at any other time if more convenient.

Ever truly yours, B. JOWETT.

1859

The sudden death of Henry Hallam was a great grief to my father, for the historian had been a good friend through thirty years. On hearing of Mr. Hallam's last days he read some "In Memoriam" aloud and dwelt on those passages which most moved him. Generally when he was asked to read the poem he would refuse, saying: "It breaks me down, I cannot." In the spring of the year the four "Idylls of the King," "Enid," "Vivien," "Elaine," "Guinevere," were prepared for publication.

"Boadicea" was also written, the metre being "an echo of the metre in the 'Atys' of Catullus":¹ he wished that it were musically annotated so that it might be read with proper quantity and force.

"Riflemen, Form!" appeared in May in the *Times* after the outbreak of war between France, Piedmont, and Austria; when more than one power seemed to be prepared to take the offensive against England; and it rang like a trumpet-call through the length and breadth of the Empire. It so happened that three days later an order from the War Office came out, approving of the formation of Volunteer rifle corps. To Colonel Richards, who was one of the prominent promoters of the movement, my father wrote: "I must heartily congratulate you on your having been able to do so much for your country; and I hope that you will not cease from your labours until it is the law of the land that every male child in it shall be trained to the use of arms." On the same day that "Riflemen, Form!" was forwarded for publication, the proofs of the last "Idyll" ("Elaine") were finally corrected for press.²

¹ A. T. MS.

² Mr. Coventry Patmore wrote to my father in May 1859: "It will please you to hear that 'Riflemen, Form!' is being responded to. I hear that four hundred clerks of the War Office alone have at once answered to the Government invitation, and on my proposing that our department should send a contingent, almost every man in the place put his name down, although a large cost will be incurred, and we are nearly all poor. If things go through the country at that rate, there never will be an invasion."

He made too a song for sailors :

Jack Tar. (Unpublished)

They say some foreign powers have laid their
heads together
To break the pride of Britain, and bring her
on her knees,
There's a treaty, so they tell us, of some dis-
honest fellows
To break the noble pride of the Mistress of
the Seas.
Up, Jack Tars, and save us !
The whole world shall not brave us !
Up and save the pride of the Mistress of
the Seas !

We quarrel here at home, and they plot against
us yonder,
They will not let an honest Briton sit at home
at ease :
Up, Jack Tars, my hearties ! and the d—l take
the parties !
Up and save the pride of the Mistress of the
Seas !
Up, Jack Tars, and save us !
The whole world shall not brave us !
Up and save the pride of the Mistress of
the Seas !

The lasses and the little ones, Jack Tars, they
look to you !

The despots over yonder, let 'em do whate'er
they please !

God bless the little isle where a man may still
be true !

God bless the noble isle that is Mistress of the
Seas !

Up, Jack Tars, and save us !

The whole world shall not brave us !

If you will save the pride of the Mistress
of the Seas.

In *Once a Week*, July 16th, was published
"The Grandmother's Apology" with a beautiful
illustration by Millais.

With a view to some new "Idylls of the
King" my father was studying "Pelleas and
Ettarre" and "La belle Isoude"; and, after
working at those already in print, went for a
holiday in August with Mr. Palgrave to Portugal.

*My father's letter-diary. Journey to Portugal
with F. T. Palgrave and F. C. Grove.*¹

August 16th. Radley's Hotel, Southampton.
Have been over the Vectis, the name of the
vessel, not Tagus, Tagus being repaired, or
running alternately with the Vectis. She is very

¹ Eldest son of Judge Sir W. Grove.

prettily got up and painted, and apparently scrupulously clean. Brookfield¹ keeps up my spirits by wonderful tales, puns, etc. I find that neither Palgrave nor Grove wants to move except as I will and they are quite content to remain at Cintra.

August 17th. Have passed a night somewhat broken by railway whistles.

[This—writes Palgrave—was Tennyson's second voyage (so far as I know) of more than Channel length. It was strange, that sensation of the little moving island, the vessel which was bridging for us the ocean between England and Iberia: "like a world hung in space," as Tennyson called it. Tennyson's flow and fertility in anecdote, such as I have elsewhere tried to sketch it, was wonderful.

No need to dwell on the few incidents which broke the pleasant monotony of the voyage: porpoises plunging and re-appearing round the ship, like black wheels ploughing the gray-blue waters: small whales spouting their fountains on the near horizon: the meridian observations; the rocks of Ushant: the beacon light on Finisterre: I name them only because of the vivid interest with which they were studied by Tennyson. But we desired nothing better than the *far niente* of those cloudless days. Presently, however, that craving for "the palms and temples of the South" which he was never to gratify, fell upon Tennyson; and he began to long in vain to push onward to Teneriffe.]

August 21st. Braganza Hotel, Lisbon. Just arrived at Lisbon and settled at the Braganza Hotel after a very prosperous voyage tho' with a

¹ Brookfield had come to see his friends off from Southampton.

good deal of rolling. We merely touched at Vigo which looked fruitful, rolled up in a hot mist, and saw Oporto from the sea, looking very white in a fat port-wine country. It is here just as hot as one would wish it to be but not at all too hot. There was a vast deal of mist and fog all along the coast as we came. Lisbon I have not yet seen except from the sea, and it does not equal expectation as far as seen.¹ Palgrave and Grove have been helpful and pleasant companions, and so far all has gone well. We shall go to Cintra either to-morrow or next day. It is said to be Lisbon's Richmond and rather cockney tho' high and cool. The man who is landlord here is English and an Englishman keeps the hotel at Cintra. I hope with good hope that I shall not be pestered with the plagues of Egypt. I cannot say whether we shall stick at Cintra or go further on. Brookfield gave a good account of the cleanliness of Seville.

August 23rd. Cintra. We drove over Lisbon yesterday in a blazing heat and saw the Church of St. Vincent, and the Botanical Gardens where palms and prickly pears and huge cactuses were growing, and enormous oleanders covered all over with the richest red blossom, and I thought of our poor one at Farringford that won't blossom. There were two strange barbaric statues at the gate of the garden, which were dug up on the top of a hill in Portugal: some call them

¹ Except the convent chapel at Belem.

Phœnician but no one knows much about them. I tried to see the grave of Fielding the novelist, who is buried in the Protestant cemetery, but could find no one to let me in ; he lies among the cypresses. In the evening we came on here ; the drive was a cold one, and the country dry, tawny, and wholly uninteresting. Cintra disappointed me at first sight, and perhaps will continue to disappoint, tho' to southern eyes from its ever green groves, in contrast to the parched barren look of the landscape, it must look very lovely. I climbed with Grove to the Peña, a Moorish-looking castle on the top of the hill, which is being repaired, and which has gateways fronted with tiles in pattern ; these gates look like those in the illustrated *Arabian Nights* of Lane.¹

August 26th. It is, I think, now decided that we are to go on to Cadiz and Seville on the 2nd, and then to Gibraltar and possibly to Tangiers, possibly to Malaga and Granada. The King's Chamberlain has found me out by my name : his name is the Marquis of Figueros or some such sound ; and yesterday even the Duke of Saldanha came into the *salle à manger*, described himself as "having fought under the great Duke, and having been in two and forty combats and successful in all, as having married two English wives, both perfect women," etc., and ended with seizing my hand and crying out "Who

¹ Then they strolled to the Bay of Apples.

does not know England's Poet Laureate? I am the Duke of Saldanha." I continue pretty well except for toothache; I like the place much better as I know it better. A visit to Santarem (the city of convents) was greatly enjoyed.

[The town itself proved a labyrinth of narrow and filthy streets, though here also were many large ecclesiastical buildings, ending in a vast ruined castle, which from an immense height commanded the river valley. Here we two (for our pleasant comrade had now left us) sat long, and beneath us saw miles on miles of level land, forest and vineyard, dotted with unknown villages, and lighted up by the long curves of the Tagus. This undoubtedly is one of the great panoramic landscapes of Europe, and I suppose the least visited. Nearer the city, thorny lines of glaucous aloe, here and there throwing out lofty flower-stems, ran up the hill-sides planted thick with olive-trees, beneath which the sun now cast down long separate shadows, and illuminated the Tagus flowing right below our eyes between wide tawny sandbanks to the deepest fold of its green and sinuous channel.¹]

Sept. 2nd. Lisbon. The heat and the flies and the fleas and one thing or another have decided us to return by the boat to Southampton which starts from this place on the 7th. We propose on arriving at Southampton to pass on to Lyndhurst to spend two or three days in the Forest.

[Our visit, we gradually found, was not at the most favourable season: the fields browned and burnt by heat, the mosquitoes afflicting. Against the latter, Tennyson had

¹ Palgrave MS.

provided himself with an elaborate tent (first contrived, I believe, by Sir C. Fellowes for use in Asia Minor, during the night-time): a sheet formed into a large bag, but ending in a muslin canopy, which was distended by a cane circle, and hung upwards, to accommodate head and shoulders, from a nail which I took the freedom to run into his bedroom wall. Into this shelter the occupant crept by a narrow sheet-funnel, which he closed by twisting; and once in, he was unable to light a match outside for fear lest the action should set the muslin on fire. Hence one night Tennyson, able to command the bell, summoned the waiter. I brought him in through my (contiguous) room with a light; and the man's terror at the spectacle of the great ghost, looking spectral within its white canopy, was delightful. He almost ran off. But I think that after this experience Tennyson abandoned the tent and took his chances: only pretending to wish that he had a little baby in bed with him, as a whiter and more tempting morsel to the insect world.

More serious than the mosquito was the sun. This so wrought upon and disturbed Tennyson, in a manner with which many English travellers to Italy during the heat will be unpleasantly familiar, that he now began gravely to talk about leaving his bones by the side of the great novelist Fielding, who died and was buried at Lisbon in 1754.¹

Sept. 13th. Southampton. Arrived, and going on to-morrow to Lyndhurst, where I shall stop two or three days, then I am going on to Cambridge with Palgrave from a longing desire that I have to be there once more.

Crown Hotel, Lyndhurst. Palgrave has been as kind to me as a brother, and far more useful than a valet or courier, doing everything. His

¹ Palgrave MS.

father is away at Spa, he (Palgrave) is horrified at being alone. I gave him hopes of his being with me till his father returned and I do not therefore like to leave him.

Sept. 20th. Cambridge. I have been spending the evening with my old tobacconist in whose house I used to lodge, and to-morrow I am to dine with Macmillan. I admire Jesus Chapel which is more like a Church than a Chapel.

[Palgrave writes : Cambridge was in Long Vacation, but Munro, the great Latin scholar, and W. G. Clark, then charming and gay, and unforeseeing the shadow destined to eclipse his later days, feasted us ; welcoming Tennyson once again back to Trinity. He showed me, with pathos in his voice of memories distant and dear, Arthur Hallam's rooms ; the "Backs," to which Oxford (he would have it) "has no rival," and the curious Jacobean brickwork of Queens' College, where in his time the "Combination room" had yet a sanded floor, and the table was set handsomely forth with long "churchwardens."]

In the autumn my father returned to Farringford and entertained the American statesman, Charles Sumner. In November he was reading with intense interest an early copy of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, sent him by his own desire ; and was finishing his "Tithonus," which he forwarded to Thackeray for the *Cornhill Magazine*.¹ A letter came from Charles Kingsley :

¹ February, 1860.

HOME LIFE AND "IDYLLS" 1859

EVERSLEY, 1859.

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

I wrote for *Fraser*, September 1850, a review of you, and especially of "In Memoriam." I am now going to publish a set of Miscellanies and thought of including that review. But when I read it through I thought I ought to ask your leave. I felt it almost too personal toward you in its expression of admiration and gratitude for your influence, and in its expression about "In Memoriam." It was necessary to be so then; for, while penny-a-liners were talking vulgar and unkind personalities, I felt bound to tell all whom I could make listen, what a gentleman and a Christian ought to think of you and your work; but I am not sure that you would like all I said there republished now that the bubble is over. Will you say "Yes" or "No"? and if you will say "Yes," you will deeply gratify me; for I wish to leave behind me some record of what I owe you. Pray remember me to Mrs. Tennyson and to your children, whom I do not know alas! I seem destined never to see you. Here I live, as busy as a bee in my parish, and never leave home but for urgent business.

Believe me your devoted C. KINGSLEY.

Soon after this the Kingsleys paid us a visit. "Charles Kingsley," so my father told me, "talked as usual on all sorts of topics and walked hard up and down the study for hours smoking furiously, and affirming that tobacco was the only thing that kept his nerves quiet." Among the topics discussed were the "Idylls" which Kingsley admired only less than "In

Memoriam." Ten thousand copies had been sold in the first week of publication, and hundreds more were selling monthly. The reviews that were best in my father's estimation appeared in the *Spectator*, the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, the last by Mr. Gladstone.¹

Letters to and from friends about the "Idylls"

From Henry W. Longfellow

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I have requested my publishers in London, Messrs. Routledge, to send you a copy of a translation of the *Divina Commedia*, which I have had the temerity to make, and which they are now publishing. In the notes I have taken the liberty to quote your beautiful song of Fortune (from "Enid"), and also part of "Ulysses," at which, I hope, you will not be displeased, as you are in very good company. Many thanks for your kind letter acknowledging the (Red Indian) red stone pipe of peace. To a civilized human being I fancy it can never be of any practical use. But it is pretty, and has a certain value as coming from those far-away Western mountains.

Always with great regard yours truly,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

¹ For chapter on the "Idylls," see vol. iii. p. 155.

From W. M. Thackeray

FOLKESTONE, *September.*

36 ONSLOW SQUARE, *October.*

MY DEAR OLD ALFRED,

I owe you a letter of happiness and thanks. Sir, about three weeks ago, when I was ill in bed, I read the "Idylls of the King," and I thought, "Oh I must write to him now, for this pleasure, this delight, this splendour of happiness which I have been enjoying." But I should have blotted the sheets, 'tis ill writing on one's back. The letter full of gratitude never went as far as the post-office and how comes it now?

D'abord, a bottle of claret. (The landlord of the hotel asked me down to the cellar and treated me.) Then afterwards sitting here, an old magazine, *Fraser's Magazine*, 1850, and I come on a poem out of "The Princess" which says "I hear the horns of Elfland blowing, blowing," no, it's "the horns of Elfland faintly blowing" (I have been into my bedroom to fetch my pen and it has made that blot), and, reading the lines, which only one man in the world could write, I thought about the other horns of Elfland blowing in full strength, and Arthur in gold armour, and Guinevere in gold hair, and all those knights and heroes and beauties and purple landscapes and misty gray lakes in which you have made me live. They seem like facts to me, since about three weeks ago (three weeks or a month was it?) when I read the book. It is on the table yonder, and I don't like, somehow, to disturb it, but the delight and gratitude! You have made me as happy as I was as a child with the *Arabian Nights*, every step I have walked

in Elfland has been a sort of Paradise to me. (The landlord gave *two* bottles of his claret and I think I drank the most) and here I have been lying back in the chair and thinking of those delightful "Idylls," my thoughts being turned to you: what could I do but be grateful to that surprising genius which has made me so happy? Do you understand that what I mean is all true and that I should break out were you sitting opposite with a pipe in your mouth? Gold and purple and diamonds, I say, gentlemen and glory and love and honour, and if you haven't given me all these why should I be in such an ardour of gratitude? But I have had out of that dear book the greatest delight that has ever come to me since I was a young man; to write and think about it makes me almost young, and this I suppose is what I'm doing, like an after-dinner speech.

P.S. I thought the "Grandmother" quite as fine. How can you at 50 be doing things as well as at 35?

October 16th. (I should think six weeks after the writing of the above.)

The rhapsody of gratitude was never sent, and for a peculiar reason; just about the time of writing I came to an arrangement with Smith and Elder to edit their new magazine, and to have a contribution from T. was the publishers' and editor's highest ambition. But to ask a man for a favour, and to praise and bow down before him in the same page seemed to be so like hypocrisy, that I held my hand, and left this note in my desk, where it has been lying during a little French-Italian-Swiss tour which my girls and their papa have been making.

Meanwhile S. E. and Co. have been making their own proposals to you, and you have replied not favourably I am sorry to hear: but now there is no reason

why you should not have my homages, and I am just as thankful for the "Idylls," and love and admire them just as much, as I did two months ago when I began to write in that ardour of claret and gratitude. If you can't write for us you can't. If you can by chance some day, and help an old friend, how pleased and happy I shall be! This however must be left to fate and your convenience: I don't intend to give up hope, but accept the good fortune if it comes. I see one, two, three quarterlies advertized to-day, as all bringing laurels to laureatus. He will not refuse the private tribute of an old friend, will he? You don't know how pleased the girls were at Kensington t'other day to hear you quote their father's little verses, and he too I dare-say was not disgusted. He sends you and yours his very best regards in this most heartfelt and artless

(note of admiration)!

Always yours, my dear Alfred,

W. M. THACKERAY.

To W. M. Thackeray

FARRINGFORD.

MY DEAR THACKERAY,

Should I not have answered you ere this 6th of November? surely: what excuse? none that I know of: except indeed, that perhaps your very generosity and boundlessness of approval made me in a measure shamefaced. I could scarcely accept it, being, I fancy, a modest man, and always more or less doubtful of

my own efforts in any line. But I may tell you that your little note gave me more pleasure than all the journals and monthlies and quarterlies which have come across me : not so much from your being the Great Novelist I hope as from your being my good old friend, or perhaps from your being both of these in one. Well, let it be. I have been ransacking all sorts of old albums and scrap books but cannot find anything worthy sending you. Unfortunately before your letter arrived I had agreed to give Macmillan the only available poem I had by me ["Sea Dreams"].¹ I don't think he would have got it (for I dislike publishing in magazines) except that he had come to visit me in my Island, and was sitting and blowing his weed vis-à-vis. I am sorry that you have engaged for any quantity of money to let your brains be sucked periodically by Smith, Elder & Co. : not that I don't like Smith who seems from the very little I have seen of him liberal and kindly, but that so great an artist as you are should go to work after this fashion. Whenever you feel your brains as the "remainder biscuit," or indeed whenever you will, come over to me and take a blow on these downs where the air as Keats said is "worth sixpence a pint," and bring your girls too.

Yours always, A. TENNYSON.

¹ "Tithonus" was sent to Thackeray for the *Cornhill*, February, 1860.

From the Duke of Argyll

LONDON, July 14th, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I think my prediction is coming true, that your "Idylls of the King" will be understood and admired by many who are incapable of understanding and appreciating many of your other works.

Macaulay is certainly not a man incapable of *understanding* anything but I knew that his tastes in poetry were so formed in another line that I considered him a good test, and three days ago I gave him "Guinevere."

The result has been as I expected, that he has been *delighted with it*. He told me that he had been greatly moved by it, and admired it exceedingly. Altho' by practice and disposition he is eminently a critic, he did not find one single fault. Yesterday I gave him the "Maid of Astolat" with which he was delighted also.

I hear the article in the *Edin. Review* is not to contain much criticism, it consists to a great extent of long extracts. But I have not seen it myself, nor am I sure who wrote it.

How are you standing this tropical heat, and Mrs. Tennyson? Let us have a good account of yourselves.

This Peace is abominable, and you should be perpetually, telescope in hand, watching for the "Liberator of Italy," who has proclaimed to his soldiers that he stops because the contest is no longer in the *interests of France!*

Yours most sincerely, ARGYLL.

To the Duke of Argyll

FARRINGFORD,
Monday, July 18th, 1859.

MY DEAR DUKE,

Doubtless Macaulay's good opinion is worth having and I am grateful to you for letting me know it, but this time I intend to be thick-skinned ; nay, I scarcely believe that I should ever feel very deeply the pen-punctures of those parasitic animalcules of the press, if they kept themselves to what I write, and did not glance spitefully and personally at myself. I hate spite.

* * * * *

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

Best remembrances to the Duchess.

From the Rev. B. Jowett

19 GLOUCESTER TERRACE,
July 17th, 1859.

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

Thank you many times for your last : I have read it through with the greatest delight, the "Maid of Astolat" twice over, and it rings in my ears. "The Lily Maid" seems to me the fairest, purest, sweetest love-poem in the English language. I have not seen any criticisms nor do I care about them. It moves me like the love of Juliet in Shakespeare (though that is not altogether parallel), and I do not doubt whatever

opinions are expressed about it that it will in a few years be above criticism.

There are hundreds and hundreds of all ages (and men as well as women) who, although they have not died for love (have no intention of doing so), will find there a sort of ideal consolation of their own troubles and remembrances.

Of the other poems I admire "Vivien" the most (the naughty one), which seems to me a work of wonderful power and skill.

It is most elegant and fanciful. I am not surprised at your Delilah reducing the wise man, she is quite equal to it.

The allegory in the distance *greatly strengthens, also elevates, the meaning of the poem.*

I shall not bore you with criticisms. It struck me what a great number of lines—

He makes no friends, who never made a foe—¹
Then trust me not at all, or all in all—

will pass current on the lips of men, which I always regard as a great test of excellence, for it is saying the thing that everybody feels.

I am sure that the "Grandmother" is a most exquisite thing.

I hope you will find rest after toil and listen to the voice that says "Rejoice, Rejoice."

Next week I shall probably be in London. I am afraid that I shall not be able to manage going abroad. But I should like to come and look in upon you if you are at any house where it would be convenient to you to see me.

¹ This line my father generally wrote in autograph albums.

With most kind regards to Mrs. Tennyson and love to the children,

Believe me ever most truly yours,
B. JOWETT.

From Arthur H. Clough

COUNCIL OFFICE,
18th July, 1859.

DEAR MRS. TENNYSON,

The Welsh books appeared suddenly one morning, by what agency I do not know, and I have already appeased my uncle's bibliomaniac fears by communicating the fact of their arrival.

The reception of the "Idylls of the King" will I hope satisfy all Farringford.

I have heard no words of dispraise: and in my own opinion they are just what we had a right to hope for, better, because more fully given, without any disparagement to what went before.

Faithfully yours, A. H. CLOUGH.

From the Duke of Argyll

July 20th, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I hope you will give me note of your arrival in town.

The applause of the "Idylls" goes on crescendo, and so far as I can hear without exception. Detractors are silenced.

Macaulay has repeated to me several times an expression of his great admiration. Another well-known

Author, himself a Poet, whom I shall not name, who heretofore could go no further than a half unwilling approval of the "Lotos-Eaters," has succumbed to the "Idylls," has laid down his arms, without reserve. I consider him a test and index of a large class of minds. I have heard of several other obdurate sinners who have been converted from the error of their ways.

Gladstone, who is not one of the class, has spoken to me, and has written to the Duchess of Sutherland that the impression of the power and beauty of these Poems increases daily in reading them.

I am delighted, specially from my love of natural history, with some of your imagery from natural things.

The passage comparing the voice of Enid to the first heard song of the nightingale is singularly beautiful in expression. So is that passage comparing the dispersion of Geraint's foes to the shoals of fish among the "crystal dykes of Camelot."

By the bye I have always omitted to ask you what you mean in one of your old poems by "The Red-Cap¹ whistled." I know of no such bird: don't you mean the *Black-Cap*, which does whistle beautifully? The Golden-crested Wren is never called "Red-Cap," nor can it be said to whistle, tho' it has a loud song.

L. Nap.'s explanation of the Peace is, I have no doubt, a tolerably correct account. But it will seem a bitter mockery to those whose "illusions" he encouraged, and now contemns.

Can you send me a copy of your song "The Great Name of England round and round"? Do.

Yours ever, ARGYLL.

¹ Provincial name for the goldfinch.

To the Duke of Argyll

E. L. Lushington's,
PARK HOUSE, MAIDSTONE,
July 29th, 1859.

MY DEAR DUKE,

Your last note was very welcome to me and if I did not answer it earlier, why, I was all the more to blame ; answered partly it was by my wife's copy of the song¹ requested, which I hope arrived safely. She has set it to music far more to the purpose than most of Master Balfe's.

"Red-cap" is, or was when I was a lad, provincial for "Gold-finch" ; had I known it was purely provincial I should probably not have used it. Now the passage has stood so long that I am loth to alter it.

Ever yours, A. TENNYSON.

From my father's mother

ROSE MANOR, WELL WALK,
Monday, Jan. 10th, 1860.

DEAREST ALLY,

I received a nice kind note from Alan Ker a short time since, which I now enclose, thinking it will give thee pleasure to know what he says about thy last beautiful and interesting poems. It does indeed (as he supposes it would) give me the purest satisfaction to notice that a spirit of Christianity is perceptible through

¹ "Riflemen, Form !"

the whole volume. It gladdens my heart also to perceive that Alan seems to estimate it greatly on that account. O dearest Ally, how fervently have I prayed for years that our merciful Redeemer would intercede with our Heavenly Father, to grant thee His Holy Spirit to urge thee to employ the talents He has given thee, by taking every opportunity of endeavouring to impress the precepts of His Holy Word on the minds of others. My beloved son, words are too feeble to express the joy of my heart in perceiving that thou art earnestly endeavouring to do so. Dearest Ally, there is nothing for a moment to be compared to the favour of God: I need not ask thee if thou art of the same opinion. Thy writings are a convincible proof that thou art. My beloved child, when our Heavenly Father summons us hence, may we meet, and all that are dear to us, in that blessed state where sorrow is unknown, never more to be separated. I hope Emmy and thyself continue well, also the dear little boys. All here join me in kindest love to both.

Ever, dearest Ally,
Thy attached and loving mother,
E. TENNYSON.

From J. Ruskin

STRASBURG.

DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I have had the "Idylls" in my travelling desk ever since I could get them across the water, and have only not written about them because I could not quite make up my mind about that increased quietness of style. I thought you would like a little to know what I felt about it, but did not quite know myself what I did feel.

To a certain extent you yourself of course know better what the work is than any one else, as all great artists do.

If you are satisfied with it, I believe it to be right. Satisfied with bits of it you must be, and so must all of us, however much we expect from you.

The four songs seem to me the jewels of the crown, and bits come every here and there, the fright of the maid for instance, and the "In the darkness o'er her fallen head," which seem to me finer than almost all you have done yet. Nevertheless I am not sure but I feel the art and finish in these poems a little more than I like to feel it.¹ Yet I am not a fair judge quite, for I am so much of a realist as not by any possibility to interest myself much in an unreal subject to feel it as I should, and the very sweetness and stateliness of the words strike me all the more as *pure* workmanship.

As a description of various nobleness and tenderness the book is without price: but I shall always wish it had been nobleness independent of a romantic condition of externals in general.

"In Memoriam," "Maud," "The Miller's Daughter," and such like will always be my own pet rhymes, yet I am quite prepared to admit this to be as good as any, for its own peculiar audience. Treasures of wisdom there are in it, and word-painting such as never was yet for

¹ So far as the word *art*, as used here by Mr. Ruskin, suggests that these Idylls were carefully elaborated, the suggestion is hardly in accordance with the fact. The more imaginative the poem, the less time it generally took him to compose. "Guinevere" and "Elaine" were certainly not elaborated, seeing that they were written, each of them, in a few weeks, and hardly corrected at all. My father said that he often did not know why some passages were thought specially beautiful, until he had examined them. He added: "Perfection in art is perhaps more sudden sometimes than we think; but then the long preparation for it, that unseen germination, *that* is what we ignore and forget."

concentration, nevertheless it seems to me that so great power ought not to be spent on visions of things past but on the living present. For one hearer capable of feeling the depth of this poem I believe ten would feel a depth quite as great if the stream flowed through things nearer the hearer. And merely in the facts of modern life, not drawing-room formal life, but the far away and quite unknown growth of souls in and through any form of misery or servitude, there is an infinity of what men should be told, and what none but a poet can tell. I cannot but think that the intense masterful and unerring transcript of an actuality, and the relation of a story of any real human life as a poet would watch and analyze it, would make all men feel more or less what poetry was, as they felt what Life and Fate were in their instant workings.

This seems to me the true task of the modern poet. And I think I have seen faces, and heard voices by road and street side, which claimed or conferred as much as ever the loveliest or saddest of Camelot. As I watch them, the feeling continually weighs upon me, day by day, more and more, that not the grief of the world but the loss of it is the wonder of it. I see creatures so full of all power and beauty, with none to understand or teach or save them. The making in them of miracles and all cast away, for ever lost as far as we can trace. And no "in memoriam."

I do not ask you when you are likely to be in London for I know you do not like writing letters, and I know you will let Mrs. Prinsep or Watts send me word about you, so that I may come and see you again, when you do come ; and then on some bright winter's day, I shall put in my plea for Denmark Hill.

Meanwhile believe me always

Faithfully and gratefully yours, J. RUSKIN.

Part of a letter from Aubrey de Vere

1860.

Love to Alfred, from whom I hope to have more of those glorious chivalrous legends. * * *

Alfred seems to be founding a school just as Raffaele and Titian founded their respective Roman and Venetian schools. There cannot be a truer tribute to genius than this. It proves that it has struck roots in the national mind.

From H.R.H. Prince Albert

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,

17th May, 1860.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

Will you forgive me if I intrude upon your leisure with a request which I have thought some little time of making, viz. that you would be good enough to write your name in the accompanying volume of your "Idylls of the King"? You would thus add a peculiar interest to the book, containing those beautiful songs, from the perusal of which I derived the greatest enjoyment. They quite rekindle the feeling with which the legends of King Arthur must have inspired the chivalry of old, whilst the graceful form in which they are presented blends those feelings with the softer tone of our present age.

Believe me always yours truly, ALBERT.

HOME LIFE AND "IDYLLS" 1859

From the Rev. Charles Kingsley

EVERSLEY RECTORY, WINCHFELD,
Nov. 10th, 1859.

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

I was amused to-night at a burst of enthusiasm in your behalf from a most unenthusiastic man (though a man of taste and scholarship), Walter the proprietor of the *Times*. He confest to having been a disbeliever in you, save in "Locksley Hall," which he said was the finest modern lyric; but he considered you had taken liberties, and so forth. But the "Idylls," he confest, had beaten him. He thought them the finest modern poem. There was nothing he did not or would not say in praise of them. He now classed the four great English poets as Shakespeare, Spenser, Byron, Tennyson, and so on, and so on, very pleasant to me though little worth to you. But I like to tell you of a "jamjam efficaci do manus scientiæ" from any one who has not as yet appreciated you, to his own harm. He did not write the disagreeable review of you in the *Times* some years back. It was, I believe, a poor envious, dyspeptic, poetaster parson, —. I tell you this for fear you should think Walter, who is really a fine fellow, had anything to do with it.

God bless you, C. KINGSLEY.

To the Duke of Argyll

FARRINGFORD,
Oct. 3rd, 1859.

MY DEAR DUKE,

We are delighted to hear that your Duchess has added another scion to your race,

and that mother and child are both prospering. I had fancied that the event would have come off while I was in Portugal (for in Portugal I have been), and made enquiries thereanent of Mr. Henry Howard¹ but he could tell me nothing.

If I came back with "bullion" in the "Tagus," it was nowhere in my packages. I went to see that Cintra which Byron and Beckford have made so famous : but the orange-trees were all dead of disease, and the crystal streams (with the exception of a few sprinkling springlets by the wayside) either dried up, or diverted thro' unseen tunnels into the great aqueduct of Lisbon. Moreover the place is cockney, and, when I was there, was crammed with Lisbon fashionables and Portuguese nobility ; yet Cintra is not without its beauties, being a mountain of green pines rising out of an everywhere arid and tawny country, with a fantastic Moorish-looking castle on the peak, which commands a great sweep of the Atlantic and the mouth of the Tagus : here on the topmost tower sat the king (they say) day by day in the old times of Vasco da Gama watching for his return, till he saw him enter the river : there, perhaps, was a moment worth having been waited for. I made some pleasant acquaintances, but I could not escape autograph hunters ; a certain Don Pedro Something even telegraphed for one after I had returned to Lisbon.

¹ English Minister at Lisbon in 1859.

As to Macaulay's suggestion of the Sangreal, I doubt whether such a subject could be handled in these days, without incurring a charge of irreverence. It would be too much like playing with sacred things. The old writers *believed* in the Sangreal. Many years ago I did write "Lancelot's Quest of the Grail" in as good verses as I ever wrote, no, I did not write, I made it in my head, and it has now altogether slipped out of memory.

My wife, I am sorry to say, has been very unwell.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

UNPUBLISHED POEM OF THIS PERIOD

The Philosopher

He was too good and kind and sweet,
 Ev'n when I knew him in his hour
 Of darkest doubt, and in his power,
 To fling his doubts into the street.

Truth-seeking he and not afraid,
 But questions that perplex us now—
 What time (he thought) have loom or plough
 To weigh them as they should be weighed?

We help the blatant voice abroad
 To preach the freedom of despair,
 And from the heart of all things fair
 To pluck the sanction of a God.

CHAPTER XI

TOUR IN CORNWALL AND THE SCILLY ISLES

1860

So great had been the success of the first four "Idylls of the King" that my father's friends begged him to "continue the epic." He received a letter from the Duke of Argyll again urging him to take up as his next subject the Holy Grail, but he said he shunned handling the subject, for fear that it might seem to some almost profane. He answered :

1860.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I sympathised with you when I read of Macaulay's death in the *Times*. He was, was he not, your next-door neighbour? I can easily conceive what a loss you must have had in the want of his brilliant conversation. I hardly knew him : met him once, I remember, when Hallam and Guizot were in his company :

Hallam was showing Guizot the Houses of Parliament then building, and Macaulay went on like a cataract for an hour or so to those two great men, and, when they had gone, turned to me and said, "Good morning, I am happy to have had the pleasure of making your acquaintance," and strode away. Had I been a piquable man I should have been piqued, but I don't think I was, for the movement after all was amicable. Of the two books I should, I think, have chosen the Crabbe, though Macaulay's criticisms on poetry would be less valuable probably than his historical ones. Peace be with him !

As to the *Sangreal*, as I gave up the subject so many long years ago I do not think that I shall resume it. You will see a little poem of mine in the *Cornhill Magazine*. My friend Thackeray and his publishers had been so urgent with me to send them something, that I ferreted among my old books and found this "Tithonus," written upwards of a quarter of a century ago, and now queerly enough at the tail of a flashy modern novel. It was originally a pendent to the "Ulysses" in my former volumes, and I wanted Smith to insert a letter, not of mine, to the editor stating this, and how long ago it had been written, but he thought it would lower the value of the contribution in the public eye. Read in Browning's *Men and Women* "Evelyn Hope" for its beauty, and "Bishop Blougram's

Apology" for its exceeding cleverness, and I think that you will not deny him his own. The *Cornhill Magazine* gives a very pleasant account of Macaulay. ⁹

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

The Duke and the Duchess spent some days at Farringford, and were most emphatic that the "Grail" ought to be written forthwith. My father said that he was not "at present in the mood for it," and read aloud his "Boadicea," which he had now quite finished. He gloried in his new English metre, but he "feared that no one could read it except himself, and wanted some one to annotate it musically so that people could understand the rhythm." "If they would only read it straight like prose," he said, "just as it is written, it would come all right." Among other guests was Lord Dufferin, full of Cyril Graham's discoveries of the white marble cities in the black basaltic land of the Hauran with their inscriptions in an unknown tongue. Then the missionary Dr. Wolff stayed with us, recounting his hair-breadth escapes in Central Asia, and giving an awe-inspiring description of an earthquake in Bokhara.

It was not until August that my father was able to go on his summer tour to Cornwall and the Scilly Isles, in company with Woolner, Palgrave, Holman Hunt and Val Prinsep.

My father's letter-diary. Tour in Cornwall and the Scilly Isles

August 18th. All Souls' Reading Room, Oxford. Before my departure Palgrave called with his Syrian brother, a very interesting man in an Eastern dress with a kind of turban, having just escaped from his convent in the Syrian Deserts where several of his fellow monks were massacred. Palgrave is obliged to stop for a week at Hampstead till the brother goes to Paris, where he will have an interview with the Emperor on the affairs of the East. I started off alone, and I believe that in a week's time Holman Hunt, Val Prinsep and Frank Palgrave will join me at Penzance. Woolner, like a good fellow, followed me here yesterday that I might not feel lonely, and this morning we breakfasted with Max Müller, and are going to dine with him at 7.

August 21st. Bideford. We came here last night at 7 o'clock. I and Woolner are going down the coast to Tintagel, where we shall stop till the others join us.

August 23rd. Bude. Fine sea here, smart rain alternating with weak sunshine. Woolner is very kindly. We go off to-day to Boscastle which is three miles from Tintagel.

August 23rd. Arrived at Tintagel, grand

coast, furious rain. Mr. Poelaur would be a good name to direct to me by.

August 25th. Tintagel. Black cliffs and caves and storm and wind, but I weather it out and take my ten miles a day walks in my weather-proofs. Palgrave arrived to-day.

To Hallam

TINTAGEL,
Aug. 25th, 1860.

MY DEAR HALLAM,

I was very glad to receive your little letter. Mind that you and Lionel do not quarrel and vex poor mamma who has lots of work to do; and learn your lessons regularly; for gentlemen and ladies will not take you for a gentleman when you grow up if you are ignorant. Here are great black cliffs of slate-rock, and deep, black caves, and the ruined castle of King Arthur, and I wish that you and Lionel and mamma were here to see them. Give my love to grandpapa and to Lionel, and work well at your lessons. I shall be glad to find you know more and more every day.

Your loving papa, A. TENNYSON.

August 28th. Tintagel. We believe that we are going to-morrow to Penzance, or in that direction. We have had two fine days and some exceedingly grand coast views. Here is an artist, a friend of Woolner's (Inchbold), sketching

now in this room. I am very tired of walking against wind and rain.

[Mr. Palgrave writes : Following the publication of the first four "Idylls of the King" in 1859, when he was intending to write further Idylls, this was, perhaps, specially entitled to be named Tennyson's Arthurian journey.

At a sea inlet of wonderful picturesqueness, so grandly modelled are the rocks which wall it, so translucently purple the waves that are its pavement,—waves whence the "naked babe" Arthur came ashore in flame,—stand the time-eaten ruins of unknown date which bear the name Tintagel. To these of course we climbed,—descending from "the castle gateway by the chasm," and at a turn in the rocks meeting that ever graceful, ill-appreciated landscapist, Inchbold : whose cry of delighted wonder at sight of Tennyson still sounds in the sole survivor's ear. Thence, after some delightful wandering walks, by a dreary road (for such is often the character of central Cornwall), we moved to Camelford on the greatly-winding stream which the name indicates. Near the little town, on the edge of the river, is shown a large block of stone upon which legend places Arthur, hiding or meditating, after his last fatal battle. It lay below the bank ; and in his eagerness to reach it and sit down (as he sat in 1851 on that other, the *Sasso di Dante* by Sta. Maria del Fiore), Arthur's poet slipped right into the stream, and returned laughing to Camelford.

The next halting-place I remember was Penzance ; whence, by Marazion, we crossed to and saw our English smaller but yet impressive and beautiful St. Michael's Mount.¹]

August 31st. Union Hotel, Penzance. I am so very much grieved for poor Simeon's loss of his wife ; it casts a gloom on my little tour : what will he do without her and with all those

¹ Palgrave MS.

children? I have now walked 10 miles a day for 10 days, equal 100, and I want to continue doing that for some time longer. I am going to-morrow to Land's End and then I must return here, and then I go to the Scilly Isles and then again return here.

Sept. 5th. Land's End Inn. I will write to Simeon to-day, tho' I rather shun writing to him on such a subject, for what can one say, what comfort can one give? We are here at this racketty, rather dirty inn, but we have had four glorious days and *magnificently coloured seas*. To-day the Scilly Isles look so dark and clear on the horizon that one expects rain.

[I was struck—Mr. Palgrave notes again—on the plateau of Sennen by the likeness between the masses of rock, piled up by Nature only, and those cromlechs which also occur in Cornwall; “Do you not remember that Wordsworth has a sonnet on this point?” Tennyson said, alluding to that beginning

“Mark the concentrated hazels . . .”

adding, “He seems to have been always before one in observation of Nature.”¹]

Sept. 6th. Penzance. I start in an hour by the boat for the Scilly Islands. The weather is splendid, and the sea as calm as any lake shut in on all sides by hills. Woolner goes back to London and Palgrave continues with me.

Sept. 9th. St. Mary's, Scilly Isles. Captain Tregarthen, who has the packet and the hotel

¹ Palgrave MS.

here, has brought me my letters : the packet only goes three times a week. I shall stop here till Wednesday ; there are West Indian aloes here 30 feet high, in blossom, and out all the winter, yet the peaches won't ripen ; vast hedges of splendid geraniums, a delight to the eye, yet the mulberry won't ripen. These Islands are very peculiar and in some respects very fine. I never saw anything quite like them.

Sept. 11th. Three Tuns, Lizard. At the Lizard ; and intend coming on to Falmouth. Hope to be at Brockenhurst next Saturday, but if not there, I shall have turned aside to see Avebury and Silbury Hill.

Sept. 20th. Falmouth. Have not found it easy to write every day in the bustle and bother of travellers' inns. I am now writing on my knees in my bedroom at a fishmonger's, there being no room at the hotel, and the whole town mad with a bazaar for riflemen, who get drunk every night and squabble and fight and disgrace themselves and their corps. We left Hunt and Val Prinsep hard at work at the Lizard, sketching on a promontory.

[Mr. Palgrave concludes his notes on this tour thus : From Falmouth¹ a little river-steamer was to carry us to Truro. We sat on deck enjoying the fresh air and sight of the fine

¹ Caroline Fox described my father on this tour in *Memories of Old Friends* : "Tennyson is a grand specimen of a man, with a magnificent head set on his shoulders like the capital of a mighty pillar. His hair is long and wavy, and covers a massive head. He wears a beard and moustache, which one begrudges, as hiding so

estuary. But upon *l'incognito* Tennyson had reckoned too soon. Our captain presently came forward with a tray and a squat bottle, and said with unimpeachable good manners that "he was aware how distinguished a passenger, etc., and that some young men sitting opposite, and he, would be much honoured if Mr. Tennyson would take a tumbler of stout with them." With as much courteous ease as if he had been a royal prince he stepped forward, said a few words of graceful thanks, pleased, and looking so; bowed to the hospitable party; and drank off his glass to their good health.

Presently the Captain reappeared, and this time it was the ladies in the cabin who begged that the Laureate would only step down among them. But the height of that small place of refuge, Tennyson declared, would render the proposed exhibition impossible; might he not be kindly excused? The good women however were not to be balked; and one after another presented her half-length above the little hatchway before us, gazed, smiled and retreated. "It was like the crowned figures who appear and vanish in *Macbeth*," he said; and so, talking with our fellow-passengers and the captain, in due time we disembarked at Truro.

Next day a long and pleasant walk took us to Perranporth, a little village on the coast, which here was a stretch of level golden sands, barred at each end by fine rocks. Some way hence, we were directed through a little labyrinth of dunes to the famous buried church of Perranzabuloe. Only a few sand-heaped lines of wall remain. But St. Piran is assigned to the fifth century, and the church might be of Arthur's age, if we place him about that period.¹]

much of that firm, forceful, but finely chiselled mouth. His eyes are large, gray (?), and open wide when a subject interests him; they are well shaded by the noble brow, with its strong lines of thought and suffering. I can quite understand Sam. Laurence calling it the best balance of head he had ever seen."

¹ Palgrave MS.

CORNWALL AND SCILLY ISLES 1860

A vivid picture of my father, from a letter addressed to my mother (23rd Sept. 1860) by Woolner, may be added :

“I expect idling about so long will make his brain so fertile that when he gets back to Farringford he will do an immense deal of work. He was physically better, there can be no question, for he actually ate breakfasts ! and partook of tarts not once but *twice* at dinner ! which he had not done before for many years : and his face had grown a reddish bronze, a very healthy colour ; and he was perpetually making jokes at expense of Palgrave, or at mine, and taking long walks, and swimming, and not smoking much, and drinking scarcely any wine. So you may consider all this as flourishing.”

In my father's note book are written as below the following Verse-Memoranda of tours in Cornwall, Isle of Wight and Ireland.¹

(*Babbicombe.*) Like serpent-coils upon the deep.

(*Torquay.*) As the little thrift
Trembles in perilous places o'er the deep.

(*From the Old Red Sandstone.*)

As a stony spring
Blocks its own issue (tho' it makes a fresh one
of course).

¹ When I was walking with my father almost for the last time, he said to me : “I generally take my nature-similes direct from my own observation of nature, and sometimes jot them down, and if by chance I find that one of my similes is like that in any author, my impulse is not to use that simile.” If he was in the vein during a walk, he would make dozens of similes that were never chronicled.

(*Fowey.*) A cow drinking from a trough on the hill-side. The netted beams of light played on the wrinkles of her throat.

(*Cornwall.*) The wildflower, called lady's finger, of a golden yellow when open'd, is, unopen'd, of a rich orange red, frequently at least in Cornwall when I observed it.

(*The open sea.*) Two great ships
That draw together in a calm.

(*Bonchurch.*) A little salt pool fluttering round a stone upon the shore.

(*I. of Wight.*)
As those that lie on happy shores and see
Thro' the near blossom slip the distant sail.

(*Park House.*) Before the leaf,
When all the trees stand in a mist of green.

After his tour in Ireland he had written on the same page :

(*Valencia.*) Claps of thunder on the cliffs
Amid the solid roar.

(*Bray Head.*)
O friend, the great deeps of Eternity
Roar only round the wasting cliffs of Time.

(*The river Shannon, on the rapids.*)
Ledges of battling water.

CHAPTER XII

FARRINGFORD FRIENDS

THE PYRENEES

DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT

1860-1862

SOME of the journals of this period have been mislaid, and Mrs. Bradley has allowed me to make use of the Reminiscences written by her during the visits which she and the present Dean of Westminster paid to us at Farringford. They begin with the first impression of my father in 1855 :

Here is Farringford, Tennyson's home, with its "careless ordered garden close to the ridge of a noble down" buried in trees. He invited Granville to dine with him to meet "Lear the artist, not the king," at Farringford two or three times, and Granville has had walks and talks with him and brings away memories full of pleasure and interest. To have come near the *man* and found in him all one could have desired in a great poet ! I must write down my first sight of him. I was on the top of the stack in the yard having a birthday feast, very gay under a blue tent with decorations

of flowers, etc. A carriage drove up to the little gate of the yard, I could not see who it was but guessed it was he. He came to the stack and looked up. I saw a tall large figure, cloak and large black wide-awake. He had no beard or moustache, I recollect being impressed with the beauty and power of his mouth and chin.

His face is full of power and thought, a deep furrow runs from nose to chin on either side, and gives a peculiar expression to the face, a lofty forehead adds to this. I remember the splendour of his eyes. He asked me who I was and told me to "throw the little maid" into his arms, promising to catch her. He asked Edith how old she was, she said "thwee to-day." He said, "Then you and I have the same birthday, August 6th." He did not say much, but walked into the little parlour. Granville came in and they talked a little. Mr. Tennyson took up the books on the table and remarked to himself about them.

He and Granville have been on an expedition to Brooke Bay, geologising, botanising, poetising, talking of everything great and small, of life inward and outward, at home and abroad, of religious and social difficulties; they talked from 12 noon to 10 p.m. almost incessantly this day, Mr. Tennyson walking back with him to the Warren Farm still talking; Granville says that beneath all the slight allusions to various subjects in his poems lies a mine of knowledge. "He speaks of poetry as a great master only can do."

Mr. Tennyson has read "Maud" to us. He is a little vexed at the reception of "Maud." He said: "You must always stand up for 'Maud' when you hear my pet bantling abused. Perhaps that is why I am sensitive about her. You know mothers always make the most of a child that is abused." He commented on the poem as he read, pointed out certain

beauties of metre and meaning which he admired himself. He excuses all that people pronounce sardonic in his poems, by saying, he does not cry out against the age as hopelessly bad, but tries to point out where it is bad in order that each individual may do his best to redeem it; as the evils he denounces are individual, only to be cured by each man looking to his own heart. He denounced evil in all its shapes, especially those considered venial by the world and society.

Speaking of Alexander Smith: "He has plenty of promise, but he must learn a different creed to that he preaches in those lines beginning 'Fame, fame, thou art next to God.' Next to God—next to the Devil say I. Fame might be worth having if it helped us to do good to a single mortal, but what is it? only the pleasure of hearing oneself talked of up and down the street."

[*Death's Jest-Book* by Thomas Lovell Beddoes he also praised.] He tells stories very well, ghost and other stories, and has plenty of humour. Amongst others he told us several stories of queer letters he has had from all sorts of people, companies, associations, etc. One young lady wrote imploring him to write some poetry for her to produce at a picnic when every one was to recite an original poem! He said the deceit of passing off his poem as her own disgusted him, on the other hand he thought it plucky to tell him what she meant to do, and he would have written it for her, but unfortunately she signed her note "Kate" and sent no address.

Those evenings when the poet, sitting in his old oak armchair after dinner in the drawing-room, talked of what was in his heart, or read some poem aloud, with the landscape lying before us like a beautiful picture framed in the dark-arched bow-window, are never to be forgotten. His moods are so variable, his conversation

so earnest, his knowledge of all things he writes about is so wide and minute. It is a rare treat to be in his domestic circle, where he talks freely and brightly without shyness or a certain morbidity which oppresses him occasionally in society. Crabbe, Gray and Keats were the chief poets he read to us.

The reference in the following letter from my father is to an article on "English Metrical Critics" contributed by Mr. Patmore to the *North British Review* for 1857 (vol. xxvii. pp. 127-161).

This is the passage referred to :

The six-syllable "iambic" is the most solemn of all our English measures. It is scarcely fit for anything but a dirge; the reason being, that the final pause in this measure is greater, when compared with the length of the line, than in any other verse. Here is an example, which we select on account of the peculiar illustration of its nature as a "dimeter brachy-catalectic," which is supplied by the *filling up* of the measure in the seventh line :

How strange it is to wake
 And watch, while others sleep,
 Till sight and hearing ache
 For objects that may keep
 The awful inner sense
 Unroused, lest it should mark
 The life that haunts the emptiness
 And horror of the dark.

We have only to *fill up* the measure in every line as well as the seventh, in order to change this verse from

the slowest and most mournful, to the most rapid and high-spirited of all English metres, the common eight-syllable quatrain ; a measure particularly recommended by the early critics, and continually chosen by poets of all times for erotic poetry, on account of its joyous air.

It will be seen that my father's second specimen is constructed by "filling up" Mr. Patmore's lines in the manner that he suggests.

MY DEAR C. P.

Specimen of the "most solemn" English metre

How glad am I to walk
 With Susan on the shore !
How glad am I to talk !
 I kiss her o'er and o'er.
I clasp her slender waist,
 We kiss, we are so fond,
When she and I are thus embraced,
 There's not a joy beyond.

Is this C. P.'s most solemn ?

Specimen of the "most high-spirited" metre

How strange it is, O God, to wake,
 To watch and wake while others sleep,
Till heart and sight and hearing ache
 For common objects that would keep

Our awful inner ghostly sense
 Unroused, lest it by chance should mark
 The life that haunts the emptiness
 And horrors of the formless dark.

Is this C. P.'s rapid and high-spirited? A. T.

1861

January. The Bensons¹ and Bradleys here. My father spoke of seeing Freshwater cliffs and the Needles from Bournemouth, and said, "The Isle of Wight looked like a water-lily on a blue lake." Talking of some poems published by an advanced young lady, which were instantly suppressed and the edition bought up by her friends, he quoted two or three passages to show how she had poetic perception rendered worthless by bad taste. One line ran: "whose looks were well-manured with love."²

January 22nd. My father said on the evening when the Bradleys were leaving: "You are going away—it is taking away a bit of my sunshine: I've been cutting down trees to let in some, and

¹ The late Archbishop of Canterbury and his wife.

² I may observe that my father was by no means a severe critic of the poems sent him. I remember his saying to Millais (about 1879):—"The average poems which I get are not at all bad, but there is just the something, I suppose, wanted, that I cannot explain." Millais assured him that he found the same difficulty in criticizing pictures by young painters, that there was a good level of performance throughout their work, yet somehow falling short of excellence.

now you are taking away a bit of it.” He continued : “ All that sounds like flattery : there is no need for us to make fine speeches. By this time you know I never do, and it is just a plain truth that your going takes away some of my sunshine.”

On Feb. 17th my father told my mother about his plan for a new poem, “The Northern Farmer.”

By the evening of Feb. 18th he had already written down a great part of “The Northern Farmer” in one of the MS. books bound in blue and red paper (which my mother always made for him herself). They also read of Sir Gareth in the *Morte d'Arthur*. About this time we went with my father to the National Gallery to see what he called “some of the great pictures of the world,” the “Titians,” the new “Veronese,”¹ and the portrait of Ariosto.

In March my mother received a letter from Mr. Jowett, a passage in which refers to some advice my father had given him with regard to the manner of expressing his theological opinions.

BALLIOL.

I had not the courage to follow Mr. Tennyson's advice about the Essay. It was, however, of great use to me, for I have modified the objectionable passages. I will send you a copy in a few days.

Believe me ever most truly yours,

B. JOWETT.

¹ The great picture, “Darius and his family before Alexander,” brought from the Pisani Palace, Venice, in 1857.

In May it was decided that my father should receive a degree at Cambridge, but we were unable to go further than Oatlands Park Hotel, for he had such a bad attack of palpitation of the heart that Cambridge had to be given up. After a few days spent in walking to Hampton Court and about the country round, we returned to Farringford, my father stopping at Winchester and Lyndhurst on the way.

Auvergne and the Pyrenees (July and August)

In the summer of 1861 we travelled in Auvergne and the Pyrenees. Some things we could not but be glad to have seen, but the difficulty of getting rooms, carriages, or even donkeys to ride in those days, and the impossibility of finding food not soaked in garlic, took away much of our pleasure.

The Cathedral at Bourges, its great pillars and its gorgeous windows, was what struck my father most on the journey out. On our arrival at Clermont, the comet was flaring over the market-place. Here we should have been content to stay, had it not been for the bad drainage.

My father and Mr. Dakyns¹ climbed the Puy de Dôme and several of the extinct volcanoes in the neighbourhood. Afterwards we drove to Mont Dore and La Bourboule; the plain of

¹ Mr. Dakyns had recently come to be our tutor; previously my mother had taught my brother and myself.

Clermont, where Peter the Hermit preached the First Crusade, and over which we looked during the drive, is very fine. At Mont Dore, while my father was reading some of the *Iliad* out aloud to us, little boys came and stood outside the window in open-mouthed astonishment. He took long walks there by the Dordogne, and one day when he came in from his walk we heard him call "Clough, come upstairs," and in walked Mr. Clough. My father, Mr. Clough and Mr. Dakyns made many expeditions to waterfalls and up mountains, Mr. Clough riding. We were delighted with the gorgeous meadows of forget-me-nots, and yellow anemones. We left Mr. Clough at Mont Dore and drove to Tulle and Perigueux, a quaint place with its old Roman Tower and Cathedral with grass-grown tower, church of St. Etienne, and city walls. Thence to Bordeaux, Tarbes, Bagnères de Bigorre where there was a magnificent thunderstorm at night, forked lightning of different colours striking the mountains on either hand. From this place my father and Mr. Dakyns made an expedition up the Pic du Midi. When the climbers reached the summit, three great eagles, they said, kept swooping round without any perceptible movement of wing. On our drive from Bigorre to Bagnères de Luchon, a brigand cut one of our trunks from behind the carriage and was making off with it, when our driver looked round and caught sight of him,

whereat the rascal ran off into the mountains, our driver cracking his whip at him and shouting out volleys of break-jaw oaths. At Bagnères de Luchon we lodged in a house among the maize fields, and one night there was in the town a grand puppet show, a sham fight between the French and the Chinese, illustrating some of the incidents in the Chinese war of 1860. The English were conspicuous by their absence. My father walked with Mr. Dakyns to the Port de Venasque and into Spain, and to see the Cascade d'Enfer and other cascades, and the Lac D'Oo, and the Lac Vert, and up several mountains; or sometimes he would ride on a white pony about the mountain valleys, one of these being the Vallée de Lys, which he much admired. Mr. Clough joined us again at Luchon. He and my father went together to the Cascade des Demoiselles. He was with us too at Luz. My father was enchanted with the torrent of the Gave de Pau, he "sat by it and watched it, and seemed to be possessed by the spirit of delight." Mr. Dakyns and he climbed toward the Brèche de Roland, Mr. Clough meeting them on their return in the Cirque de Gavarnie, where my father said that the phrase "slow dropping veils of thinnest lawn" was taken from the central cataract which pours over the cliff. He observed that Gavarnie did not impress him quite so much this time as when he was here before. It seemed to him "different, but still the finest thing in

the Pyrenees.” Mr. Clough noticed how silent my father was, and how absorbed by the beauty of the mountains. On August 6th, my father’s birthday, we arrived at Caunteretz,—his favourite valley in the Pyrenees. Before our windows we had the torrent rushing over its rocky bed from far away among the mountains and falling in cataracts. Patches of snow lay on the peaks above, and nearer were great wooded heights glorious with autumnal colours, bare rocks here and there, and greenest mountain meadows below. He wrote his lyric “All along the Valley”¹ “after hearing the voice of the torrent seemingly sound deeper as the night grew” (in memory of his visit here with Arthur Hallam).

And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.

My father, Mr. Clough and Mr. Dakyns climbed to the Lac de Gaube, a blue, still lake among fir woods, where my father quoted to Mr.

¹ Extract from Clough’s *Journal*: “Sept. 1st. The Tennysons arrived here at 6.30 yesterday. Tennyson was here with Arthur Hallam thirty-one years ago; and really finds great pleasure in the place: they stayed here and at Caunteretz. He is very fond of this place evidently.”

“Clough,” said my father, “had great poetic feeling: he read me then his ‘In Mari Magno’ and cried like a child over it.”

My father was vexed that he had written “two and thirty years ago” in his “All along the Valley” instead of “one and thirty years ago,” and as late as 1892 wished to alter it since he hated inaccuracy. I persuaded him to let his first reading stand, for the public had learnt to love the poem in its present form: and besides “two and thirty” was more melodious.

Clough the simile of the "stately pine" in "The Princess," which he made from a pine here on an island in mid-stream between two cataracts. More pines he found had grown by the side of this solitary pine that he remembered years ago.

And standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

My father clambered on to the Lac Bleu; he said that the water was marvellously blue except where the shadow of the mountains made parts of the lake purple. My mother writes in her journal:

"We had a sad parting from Mr. Clough at Pau. There could not have been a gentler, kinder, more unselfish or more thoughtful companion than he has been. Among other kind things he corrected the boys' little journals for them; we called him the 'child-angel.' After stopping at Pau for a few days we journeyed home by Dax, St. Emilion, Libourne, Tours and Amiens: and on our return A. said to me: 'I have seen many things in this tour I shall like to remember.'"

My father wrote to the Duke of Argyll on his return:

LETTER TO DUKE OF ARGYLL 1861

THE TEMPLE, LONDON, 1861.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I had intended to write yesterday so that my answer might have reached Cliveden on the 10th, and I scarce know why I did not : perhaps because in these chambers I had lighted on an old and not unclever novel *Zohrab the Hostage* ; partly perhaps because I had fallen into a muse about human vanities and “ the glories of our blood and state ” (do you know those grand old lines of Shirley’s ?). This must have been suggested by the progress of His Majesty the Mayor down the Strand, where I was entangled for half an hour in a roaring crowd and hardly escaped unbruised ;—however, what with the novel and what with the musing fit, I let the post slip ; but this morning let me say that I am grateful for the enquiring after myself and mine : of myself indeed I have no good account to render, being very far from well, living at a friend’s rooms here in the Temple, and dancing attendance on a doctor. France, I believe, over-set me, and more especially the foul ways and unhappy diet of that charming Auvergne : no amount of granite craters or chestnut-woods, or lava-streams, not the Puy de Dôme which I climbed, nor the Glen of Royat, where I lived, nor the plain of Clermont seen from the bridge there, nor the still more magnificent view of the dead volcanoes from the ascent to Mont Dore could make amends for those drawbacks : so we

all fell sick by turns : my wife is better since our return, and the boys are well enough, tho' they suffered too at the time ; but I remain with a torpid liver, not having much pleasure in anything : yet I can still grieve with my friends' griefs, and therefore I am sorry for the occasion which exiles your good and kind Duchess, tho' it be but for this December. I am sure the Duchess will sympathise with my disgust at having my Freshwater (where I had pitched my tent, taken with its solitariness) so polluted and defiled with brick and mortar, as is threatened ; they talk of laying out streets and crescents, and I oscillate between my desire of purchasing land at a ruinous price in order to keep my views open, and my wish to fly the place altogether. Is there no millionaire who will take pity on the wholesome hillside and buy it all up ?

"Boadicea," no, I cannot publish her yet, perhaps never, for who can read her except myself ? I have half consented to write a little ode on the opening of the International Exhibition. The commissioners prest me : I should never have volunteered ; for I hate a subject given me, and still more if that subject be a public one. Present my best remembrances to your Duchess and to [her mother] the Duchess of Sutherland. I am half afraid to inquire after her Grace's eyesight lest I should hear ill news.

Yours, my dear Duke, always,

A. TENNYSON.

In September Lord Dufferin wrote :

CLANDEBOY, BELFAST, *Sept. 24th*, 1861.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

I wonder if you will think me very presumptuous for doing what at last, after many months' hesitation, I have determined to do.

You must know that here in my park in Ireland there rises a high hill, from the top of which I look down not only on an extensive tract of Irish land, but also on St. George's Channel, a long blue line of Scotch coast, and the mountains of the Isle of Man.

On the summit of this hill I have built an old-world tower which I have called after my mother "Helen's Tower."

In it I have placed on a golden tablet the birthday verses which my mother wrote to me on the day I came of age, and I have spared no pains in beautifying it with all imaginable devices. In fact my tower is a little "Palace of Art." Beneath is a rough outline of its form and situation.

Now there is only one thing wanting to make it a perfect little gem of architecture and decoration and that is "*a voice*." It is now ten years since it was built and all that time it has stood silent. Yet if he chose there is one person in the world able to endow it with this priceless gift, and by sending me some little short distich for it to crown it for ever with a glory it cannot otherwise obtain, and render it a memorial of the personal friendship which its builder felt for the great poet of our age.

Yours ever, DUFFERIN.

In answer my father sent the following lines, and annotated, as below, the words "recurring Paradise" :

Helen's Tower

Helen's Tower, here I stand,
 Dominant over sea and land.
 Son's love built me and I hold
 Mother's love engrav'n in gold.
 Love is in and out of time,
 I am mortal stone and lime.
 Would my granite girth were strong
 As either love to last as long !
 I should wear my crown entire
 To and thro' the Doomsday fire,
 And be found of angel eyes
 In earth's recurring Paradise.¹

¹ The fancy of some poets and theologians that Paradise is to be the renovated earth, as, I dare say, you know.

The death of the Prince Consort in December my father felt was a great loss to Britain and the Empire. He sent the first copies of his *Dedication* of the "Idylls" to the Princess Alice with the following letter :

MADAM,

Having heard some time ago from Sir C. B. Phipps that your Royal Highness had expressed a strong desire that I should in some way "idealize" our lamented Prince, and being at that time very unwell, I was unwilling to attempt the subject, because I feared that I might scarce be able to do it justice ; nor did

I well see how I should idealize a life which was in itself an ideal.

At last it seemed to me that I could do no better than dedicate to his memory a book which he himself had told me was valued by him. I am the more emboldened to send these lines to your Royal Highness, because having asked the opinion of a lady who knew and truly loved and honoured him, she gave me to understand by her reply that they were true and worthy of him: whether they be so or not, I hardly know, but if they do not appear so to your Royal Highness, forgive me as your Father would have forgiven me.

Though these lines conclude with an address to our beloved Queen I feel that I cannot do better than leave the occasion of presenting them to the discretion of your Royal Highness.

Believe me, as altogether sympathizing with your sorrow,

Your Royal Highness'

faithful and obedient servant,

A. TENNYSON.

1862

Jan. 9th. My father recited in a rolling voice his new Ode for the opening of the Exhibition in the summer.¹ He explained that

¹ Sung May 1, 1862; set by Sterndale Bennett. One newspaper reported that the poet-laureate was present, "clothed in his green *baize*" (probably a misprint for "bays").

the rhythm and composition were hampered by the necessity of arranging it for a choir of 4000 voices: "I think for that kind of Ode the wild irregular bursts are an addition to its effectiveness." The lines on the death of the Prince Consort had to be put in after the first draft was written. My father was deeply grieved, not only by the death of the Prince, but also by the deaths of his two friends Clough and Godley. He wrote: "We have lost Clough: he died at Florence of a relapse of malaria-fever: it gave me a great shock. I see that Godley too has gone: so we fall, one by one."

Jan. 19th. Princess Alice wrote to my father about the *Dedication* of the "Idylls" to the Prince Consort:

If words could express *thanks* and *real* appreciation of lines so beautiful, so truly worthy of the great pure spirit which inspired the author, Princess Alice would attempt to do it;—but these failing, she begs Mr. Tennyson to believe how much she admires them, and that this just tribute to the memory of her beloved Father touched her deeply. Mr. Tennyson could not have chosen a more beautiful or true testimonial to the memory of him who was so really good and noble, than the dedication of the 'Idylls of the King' which he so valued and admired. Princess Alice transmitted the lines to the Queen, who desired her to tell Mr. Tennyson, with her sincerest thanks, how much moved she was on reading them, and that they had soothed her aching, bleeding heart. She knows also how *he* would have admired them.

CROWN PRINCESS OF PRUSSIA 1862

The Crown Princess of Prussia also wrote :

February 23rd, 1862.

The first time I ever heard the "Idylls of the King" was last year, when I found both the Queen and Prince quite in raptures about them. The first bit I ever heard was the end of "Guinevere," the last two or three pages : the Prince read them to me, and I shall never forget the impression it made upon me hearing those grand and simple words in his voice ! He did so admire them, and I cannot separate the idea of King Arthur from the image of him whom I most revered on earth !

I almost know the "Idylls of the King" by heart now : they are really sublime !

Surely it must give the Author satisfaction to think that his words have been drops of balm on the broken and loving hearts of the widowed Queen and her orphan children.

VICTORIA,
Crown Princess of Prussia, Princess Royal.

Even the "calm Spedding" wrote enthusiastically about the "Dedication" :

The thing I had to say was merely that the Dedication was, and continues to be, the most beautiful and touching thing of the kind that I ever read, to which I have nothing to add except that I find *that* to be the general opinion of men and women within my small circle of acquaintance. Not that I have heard it much talked of. But I think that is because people are afraid of not meeting with the sympathy they require in such a case. With some of my most intimate friends, whom I was frequently meeting, not a word passed about it for weeks, till at last some accident

brought it shyly out, and we found we had been all the time thinking exactly alike.

Hitherto I have enjoyed the quiet dignity belonging to the editor of a book of good repute which everybody is willing to be thought familiar with, but nobody reads, so the critics have taken their information from the preface, and passed me to the respectable shelf with compliments. But now I come on ground [*the Life of Francis Bacon*] where they have opinions of their own, and must be prepared for the rougher side of the critic tongue. Of all creatures that feed upon the earth, the professional critic is the one whose judgment I least value for any purpose except advertisement, but of all writers, the one whom he sits in judgment on is also the one whom he is least qualified to assume a superiority over. For is it likely that a man, who has written a serious book about anything in the world, should not know more about that thing than one who merely reads his book for the purpose of reviewing it? But so it must be : and a discreet man must just let it be. What I want to know is whether men and women and children who care nothing about me, but take an intelligent interest in the subject, find the book readable. What its other merits are nobody knows so well as [I].

Letters to the Duke of Argyll

FARRINGFORD, Feb. 1862.

MY DEAR DUKE,

Many thanks for your very interesting letter. Very touching is what you tell me about the Queen. I am of course exceedingly gratified that anything which I have written should have

the power to console one whom we all love ; strange that a book¹ which, when it first appeared, was pronounced by more than one clergyman as Pantheistic, if not, as (I think) one wiseacre commented on it, Atheistic, should have such a power, but after all it is very little that words can do. Time, time !

I have written out for the Princess Royal a morsel from "Guinevere." I do so hate re-writing my own things that my pen refuses to trace the "Dedication."

Her critique on the "Idylls" is enthusiastic, and mingled up with the affection of her father, as I would wish it to be. As to joining these with the "Morte d'Arthur," there are two objections,—one that I could scarcely light upon a finer close than that ghostlike passing away of the king, and the other that the "Morte" is older in style.² I have thought about it and arranged all the intervening Idylls, but I dare not set to work for fear of a failure, and time lost. I am now about my "Fisherman," which is heroic too in its way.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

If you call me Mr. Tennyson any longer, I think that I must Your-grace you till the end of the chapter.

¹ "In Memoriam."

² "'The Coming and the Passing of Arthur' are simpler and more severe in style, as dealing with the awfulness of Birth and Death."—A. T.

MONDAY, *March 3rd*, 1862.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have been out on a visit (a very unusual proceeding on my part), and on returning found your letter, which a little dismayed me, for, as you in the prior one had bound me by no promise of secrecy, I, in talking of Her Majesty and her sorrow, did say to two friends, whom I bound by such a promise, that she had found comfort in reading "In Memoriam," and had made the private markings therein.

I don't suppose much harm would result even if these broke their promise, for that is all that could be reported ; still I am vexed, because if the Queen heard of the report she might fancy that her private comments were public prey. As to those very interesting ones communicated in your last, whether you had bound me to secrecy or not, I should not have dreamt of repeating them : they are far too sacred ; and possibly your caution of silence only refers to these.

I hope so. I think it *must* be so. I wrote off the very day I returned to both my friends, urging them to abide by their promise, for in these days of half-unconscious social treachery and multitudinous babble I felt that I ought to make assurance doubly sure. You can scarce tell how annoyed I have been. I hope the Princess Royal got my note and inclosure, but she has not acknowledged it. My letters, I believe, have ere this been opened and stopt at

our little Yarmouth P.O. but not in the present Postmaster's time.

My best remembrances to the Duchess.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

March 26th, 1862.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I am a shy beast and like to keep in my burrow. Two questions, what sort of salutation to make on entering Her¹ private room? and whether to retreat backward? or sidle out as I may?

I am sorry to hear that you were the worse for your journey. I myself am raven-hoarse with cold.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

April, 1862.

MY DEAR DUKE,

As you were kind enough to say that you would mention Woolner's name to the Queen, I send a photograph of a work of his, which Gladstone, who saw it the other day, pronounced the first thing he had seen after the antique. The children are Thomas Fairbairn's, deaf and dumb, not pretty certainly, but infinitely pathetic.

I do not say, show this to Her Majesty, you know best, but admit that myself and Gladstone are justified in our admiration.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

¹ The Queen's.

*My father's first visit to the Queen, April, 1862,¹
after the death of the Prince Consort*

A. was much affected by his interview with the Queen. He said that she stood pale and statue-like before him, speaking in a quiet, unutterably sad voice. "There was a kind of stately innocence about her." She said many kind things to him, such as "Next to the Bible 'In Memoriam' is my comfort." She talked of the Prince, and of Hallam, and of Macaulay, and of Goethe, and of Schiller in connection with him, and said that the Prince was so like the picture of Arthur Hallam in "In Memoriam," even to his blue eyes. When A. said that he thought that the Prince would have made a great king, she answered, "He always said that it did not signify whether *he* did the right thing or did not, so long as the right thing was done."

A. said, "We all grieve with your Majesty," and the Queen replied, "The country has been kind to me, and I am thankful."

When the Queen had withdrawn, Princess Alice came in with Princess Beatrice.

After the interview my father wrote to Lady Augusta Bruce :²

¹ This account was written down by my mother immediately after my father's return from Osborne.

² Afterwards the wife of Dean Stanley, then Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen.

FARRINGFORD, *April 17th*, 1862.

MY DEAR LADY AUGUSTA,

Accept my very best thanks for your kind letter. I perceive that it was written on the evening of that day when I called at Osborne, but I received it only yesterday; then I thought that I would wait till the prints¹ arrived, but as they have not, I will not delay my answer.

I was conscious of having spoken with considerable emotion to the Queen, but I have a very imperfect recollection of what I did say. Nor indeed—which perhaps you may think less excusable—do I very well recollect what Her Majesty said to me: but I loved the voice that spoke, for being very blind I am much led by the voice, and blind as I am and as I told Her I was, I yet could dimly perceive so great an expression of sweetness in Her countenance as made me wroth with those imperfect cartes de visite of H.M. which Mayall once sent me. Will you say, as you best know how to say it, how deeply grateful I am to Her Majesty for the prints of Herself and of Him which She proposes to send me, and how very much I shall value Her Gift? I was charmed with Princess Alice. She seemed to me what Goethe calls *eine Natur*. Did he not say that was the highest compliment that could be paid to a woman?

¹ Portraits of the Queen and Prince Consort.

and the little Beatrice with her long tresses was very captivating. Thank you also for what you tell me of your own family. True, as you write, I often receive similar communications, but the value of these depends on the value of those from whom they come. I often scarce believe that I have done anything, especially when I meet with too flowery compliments: but when I know that I am spoken to sincerely, as by your Ladyship, I lift my head a little, and rejoice that I am not altogether useless.

Believe me, yours very truly,
A. TENNYSON.

CHAPTER XIII

DERBYSHIRE AND YORKSHIRE

LETTERS

1862-1864¹

DURING this summer, after finishing his "Enoch Arden,"² or "The Fisherman" as he called it then, my father went with Palgrave for a tour to Derbyshire and Yorkshire. On his return I remember hearing him express delight at the beauties of Haddon Hall, and at the glories of the Peak cavern. The guide had asked the travellers, before entering the cavern, at what scale they would wish to see the Great Hall illuminated, for when the Emperor of Russia had been there, he had chosen the most magnificent of the illuminations offered. My father answered: "Let us be as grand as Emperors for once": and Palgrave and he were amply re-

¹ See Appendix, p. 351, for Reminiscences by Thomas Wilson and William Allingham, 1863-64.

² See FitzGerald's "Hints for 'Enoch Arden'" in Appendix, p. 355.

warded by the wonderful colour-effects produced, and especially by the display of the crimson fire. From Castleton they went to Ripon, Leyburn, Middleham, Wensleydale, Bolton, and Skipton. My father told me that it was at Middleham Castle he had made the lines in "Geraint and Enid":

And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,
And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers.

At Christmas a greeting from Edward Fitzgerald came:

MARKET HILL, WOODBRIDGE,
1862.

Let me hear how you both are and your boys, and where you have been this summer.

I have, as usual, nothing to tell of myself: boating all the summer and reading *Clarissa Harlowe* since; you and I used to talk of the book more than 20 years ago. I believe I am better read in it than almost any one in existence now. No wonder, for it is almost intolerably tedious and absurd. But I can't read the *Adam Bedes*, *Daisy Chains*, etc. at all: I look at my row of Sir Walter Scott, and think with comfort that I can always go to him of a winter evening, when no other book comes to hand.

I think you must come over here one summer-day, not till summer, but before more summers are gone. Else, who knows? Do you smoke? I sometimes talk with seafaring men who come from Boston in billyboys, and from Goole, and other places in the Humber, and then I don't forget the coast of Locksley Hall.

1863

In January my father wrote to Frederick Locker, sending at the same time a volume of his poems for his daughter Eleanor :

FARRINGFORD,
Jan. 31st, 1863.

DEAR MR. LOCKER,

I am glad that your young lady approves of my little book. Why wouldn't you let me give it to her ?

As to this canard of a Baronetcy, I remember the same foolish rumour arising some years ago, and with some little trouble I put it down, or it died down of itself. In this instance the notice had been out in the *Athenæum* several days before I heard of it, but I answered the first letter which alluded to it, by declaring that the rumour was *wholly* unfounded ; so that, as no Baronetcy has been offered, there is less reason for considering your friendly pros and cons as to acceptance or refusal ; if it had, I trust that I should have had grace and loyalty enough to think more of the Queen's feelings than my own in this matter. I mean whichever way I answered. Both myself and my wife have been somewhat vexed, and annoyed, by all this chatter.

Kind regards to Lady Charlotte. I shall be glad to see you here, whenever you like to come our way. Froude promised me he would come

1863 "WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA"

in January, but January is breathing his last today.

Yours very truly,
ALFRED TENNYSON.

On March 6th my father sent off his "Welcome to Alexandra." He would like to have seen the pageant at the Prince of Wales' wedding, but his ticket for the Chapel only arrived on the 10th, having been mis-sent.

After the arrival of the Princess of Wales in England, Lady Augusta Bruce wrote :

WINDSOR CASTLE,
March 8th, 1863.

DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

Last night, a few minutes after the advent of the lovely Bride, while I felt my heart still glowing from seeing the look of inexpressible brightness, confidence, and happiness, with which she alighted on the threshold of Windsor Castle and threw herself into the arms of her new family, your letter, and the beautiful lines of welcome it enclosed, were put into my hands.

I cannot convey to you the impression they made on me, or how I longed to put them into the hands of our beloved Queen, how I longed that the heart of the nation should be moved and touched by them, as mine had been, that the noble, soul-inspiring feeling of which we have witnessed the outburst, should find itself so expressed. The Queen's response to your words was all that I had expected. Her Majesty desires me to thank you very warmly, and to tell you with how much pleasure she has read the lines,¹ and how much she

¹ "A Welcome," published by Moxon (March, 1863).

rejoices that the sweet and charming Princess should be thus greeted.

One looks at her with trembling hope, but every expression, every act, word, and gesture more than justifies one's most sanguine expectations and desires. God grant it for the sake of the Prince, the Country, and I am tempted to feel above all, for the sake of that sorrowing heart, which is ever more and more being lifted up to the divine height of which you speak. Truly the royal mourner is bearing this joy as she has borne the sorrow, and it is a spectacle that would move a heart of stone. I should have liked you and dear Mrs. Tennyson to see the light on Her Majesty's countenance, as she read your lines and as she speaks of the young joyous bride, so joyous but so tender and gentle to the widowed mother; also when Her Majesty speaks of the feeling manifested by her people, realizing as she does all that is contained in it.

I remain yours truly,

AUGUSTA BRUCE.

At this time my father's indignation against Russia for her treatment of Poland was boundless. He was filled with horror too at the gigantic civil war in America, although he had always looked forward anxiously to the total abolition of slavery:¹ but he had hoped that it might have been accomplished gradually and peacefully.

“There is a look in his face,” wrote Mrs.

¹ He would sing with enthusiasm the great chorus of the “Battle-hymn of the Republic”:

“Singing ‘Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!’
His soul goes marching on. . . .”

Bradley, "like a bright burning light behind it, like an inward fire that might consume his very life."

In May the Queen asked my father what she could do for him, and he said: "Nothing, Madam, but shake my two boys by the hand. It may keep them loyal in the troublous times to come." So on the 9th Her Majesty sent for us all to Osborne. We lunched with Lady Augusta Bruce, and drove with her in the grounds.

After returning to the Palace we waited in the drawing-room, and the Queen came to us. All the Princesses came in by turns, Prince Leopold also.

My mother wrote :

"The Queen is not like her portraits, her face is full of intelligence and is very mobile and full of sympathy. A. was delighted with 'the breadth and freedom of her mind.' We talked of everything in heaven and earth. Shades of pain and sadness often passed over the Queen's face.

On the 11th a Queen's messenger rode over, bringing from Her Majesty Guizot's edition of Prince Albert's *Speeches*, *In der Stille* by Karl Sudhoff, *Lieder des Leides* by Albert Zeller, and an Album of the Queen's, in which A. was to write something." He wrote out "All along the Valley," and the next day sent the following letter to Lady Augusta Bruce :

May 12th, 1863.

DEAR LADY AUGUSTA,

I had no time yesterday to overlook the volume which Her Majesty sent me. I did but see the inscription in the beginning by the Duchess of Kent and Goethe's "Edel sei der Mensch" in the Prince's handwriting—a poem which has always appeared to me one of the grandest things which Goethe or any other man has written. Perhaps some time or other the Queen will allow me to look at the book again.

The little song which I inserted in it was repeated to H.M. last year by the Duke of Argyll who told me that she approved of it, and I thought it more graceful to give an unpublished than an already printed one.

Cauteretz, which I had visited with my friend before I was twenty, had always lived in my recollection as a sort of Paradise ; when I saw it once more, it had become a rather odious watering-place, but the hills wore their old green, and the roaring stream had the same echoes as of old. Altogether I like the little piece as well as anything I have written : I hope I wrote it out correctly—for I was very much hurried—and I feel sure that in my note to yourself I somewhere or other made pure nonsense of a sentence by putting an 'of' for an 'a' or 'and.'

I have read Guizot's Preface, which is just what it ought to be—compact, careful, reverential : I have also dipt slightly into the *Medita-*

tions and what I have read of them I can quite approve of: their one defect to me being that I discern the German through the translation. Passages here and there which would look quite natural in the original read a little too quaintly in our English: yet I find my appreciation of these essays scarce lessened by feeling that they are a translation. They are true-hearted, tender, and solacing, and contrasting advantageously with our disquisitions on these subjects. Does H.M. know the sermons of Robertson of Brighton? he died young, not very long ago. These have always appeared to me the most spiritual utterances of any minister of the church in our times.

I am glad that the Queen remembers my visit with pleasure, and refers to the conversation she held with us, not without interest.

It was very good of you to think of bringing the book: we were sorry, it could not be.

Believe me, dear Lady Augusta,
Yours very truly,
A. TENNYSON.

My father wrote to the Duke of Argyll:

FARRINGFORD,
May 28th, 1863.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have delayed so long granting the "absolution,"¹ that like enough by this time you may have forgotten that you desired it.

¹ Because the Duke had repeated to the Queen "All along the Valley."

However it is granted.

Only do not, after absolution, begin sinning the sin again with a greater gusto.

Of course I am glad to have given a moment's satisfaction to our poor Queen, glad too that you give a somewhat better account of her.

I had a very pleasant two days' visit to Cliveden. I sat in your favourite seat which looks over the reach of the river, and regretted that you were not at my side. Gladstone was at C. with me. I had met him before, but had never seen him so nearly. Very pleasant, and very interesting he was, even when he discoursed on Homer, where most people think him a little hobby-horsical : let him be. His hobby-horse is of the intellect and with a grace.

Yours ever, A. TENNYSON.

In the summer we went on a tour to York, Harrowgate, Ripon and Fountains Abbey : my father was busy with his translation of Homer, and with his *Alcaics* to Milton.

O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages.

After the different experiments in Classical metre had been published in the *Cornhill* for December, my uncle Frederick wrote as follows :

I got a letter from Fitzgerald yesterday, in reply to a note from me communicating to him poor Thackeray's sudden death, which I thought it very possible he might never have learnt in his solitude and indifference to newspapers. He tells me he has been ill with his old complaint, blood to the head, and expects to be taken off by it in the end ; he hopes it may be suddenly, that he may not linger after an attack in a paralysed state. But there is "a Providence that shapes our *ends*," and whatever those ends may be, whether apoplexy, paralysis, or the painless separation of the *man* from his integuments, or natural death, not a very different thing from putting off your clothes to go to bed, no doubt (tho' poor Fitz cannot see a hand's breadth before him in these matters) all is for the best. I read Alfred's experiments in Classical metres in the *Cornhill*, and think them clever, though I prefer the translation from Homer. I send him an Italian sonnet which I am rather proud of, though Petrarch would stand aghast at it, and Dante would tell me to mind my own business.

Mr. Jowett, Mr. W. G. Clark (Public Orator at Cambridge), Dr. and Mrs. Butler, and the Bradleys were among our guests at Farringford. The flow of my father's jests and stories, when he had sympathetic listeners, was inexhaustible : and this party was particularly sympathetic.

One evening they were talking of repartee, and my father said, laughing : "I would give all my poems to have made the two following retorts courteous. (1) A certain Emperor, seeing at Court a man said to be very like him, blurted

out, 'You are very like our family : is it possible that your mother was much at Court ?' 'No ! sire,' said the man, 'but my father was.' (2) The Prince Regent, being in Portsmouth one day and seeing Jack Towers across the street, shouted out in his royal way, 'Hulloa, Towers, I hear you are the greatest blackguard in Portsmouth !' Towers replied with a low bow, 'I hope your Royal Highness has not come here to take away my character !' "

He also thought that two of the neatest repartees were (1) the reply of Sir Thomas More, who had just been made Chancellor, to Manners, who had just been made Earl of Rutland. Manners had made the satirical remark : "Take care, my lord, lest "Honores mutant Mores," and More replied : "That goes better in English, 'Take care, my lord, lest 'Honours change Manners.'" (2) The reply of the Italian lady to Napoleon who observed to her, "Tutti Italiani sono perfidi." "Non tutti, ma Buona parte."

At the end of December my father was finishing "Aylmer's Field." He said : "The story is incalculably difficult to tell, the dry facts are so prosaic in themselves." He often pointed out how hard he had found such and such a passage, how much work and thought it had cost him ; for instance, the lawyer at work in chambers ; the pompous old Aylmer in his wrath ; the suicide. He liked his own descrip-

tions of English landscape, and of cottages covered with creepers ; and especially the passage about the Traveller's Joy.

The following letter was written by my father to a stranger who questioned him as to his belief in a hereafter.

SIR,

I have been considering your questions, but I am not a God or a disembodied spirit that I should answer them. I can only say that I sympathize with your grief, and if faith mean anything at all it is trusting to those instincts, or feelings, or whatever they may be called, which assure us of some life after this.

A. TENNYSON.

He also wrote to Mr. Swinburne about "Atalanta in Calydon" :

MY DEAR SIR,

Accept my congratulations on the success of your Greek play. I had some strong objections to parts of it, but these I think have been modified by a re-perusal, and at any rate I daresay you would not care to hear them ; here however is one. Is it *fair* for a Greek chorus to abuse the Deity something in the *style* of the Hebrew prophets ?

Altogether it is many a long day since I have

read anything so fine ; for it is not only carefully written, but it has both strength and splendour, and shows moreover that you have a fine metrical invention which I envy you.

Yours very truly, A. TENNYSON.

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(P. 338.) REMINISCENCES BY THOMAS WILSON AND
WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

1863-64

Mr. Wilson writes :

We used frequently to walk together with the boys, sometimes drawing Mrs. Tennyson in her little four-wheeled carriage along the Downs, towards the Needles, through Maiden's Croft over the little rustic bridge across the lane, where sometimes inquisitive strangers used to lie in wait to catch a sight of the Poet.

Maiden's Croft reminds me of Mr. Tennyson's resentment of Mr. Ruskin's criticising his line in "Maud" as a "pathetic fallacy" :

And left the daisies rosy.

"Why," he said, "the very day I wrote it, I saw the daisies rosy in Maiden's Croft, and thought of enclosing one to Ruskin labelled 'A pathetic fallacy.'" I remember asking him if unselfishness was the essence of virtue? his reply was "Certainly."

Not unfrequently I used to have evening talks with him on the way up to bed, looking at the many pictures that adorned the staircase : these he said he looked at far more frequently than pictures in the room. On one of these occasions, as he was holding a candle to examine some book or picture (for he was very near-sighted), his wavy dark hair took fire ; I was for putting it out : "Oh, never mind," he said, "it depends upon chance burnings."

He spoke of "the wind torturing the roof," and used often

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to mount outside the roof from his attic-chamber, to admire the moonlight, and the sound of the breakers in the Bay. He was so short-sighted that the moon, without a glass, seemed to him like a shield across the sky.¹

He came into my room one day looking for any new book to feed upon : he took down one by Stevenson called *Praying and Working*, an account of German Ragged Schools ; he told me afterwards he had read it with great pleasure ; he was keen to get De Morgan's *From Matter to Spirit*.

On Lionel's birthday we acted a little Play or Charade : the first scene, to represent the word 'lion,' was the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe from *Midsummer Night's Dream* ; the servants were admitted to the performance, and laughed heartily at Wall, the Moon, and other grotesque characters. Tennyson remarked that this confirmed his opinion of the enduring popularity of broad Comedy in England.

Tennyson always said that his childhood had been at times very unhappy ; and his desire was to make Hallam and Lionel's childhood as happy as possible : he encouraged Lionel, who had some talent for drawing, to copy natural objects.

He used sometimes to read aloud in the evening, in a deep sustained sonorous voice. I remember little Hallam warning me not to trouble him when he was smoking his first morning pipe, when he used to think that his best inspirations came.

At the time of these Recollections I was not in good health, sometimes suffering from fits of melancholy ; on one such occasion he said, "If you wish to kill yourself don't do it here : go to Yarmouth and do it decently" ; on another occasion he said, "Just go grimly on." I once spoke of Christ as an example of failure. "Do you," said he, "call that failure which has altered the belief and the social relations of the whole world ?"

Mr. Allingham writes :

Oct. 3rd, 1863. Saturday. We drove to Farringford (Mrs. A., Clough and W. A.), picking up on the way Pollock and his son. Drawing-room tea, Mrs. Tennyson in white, I

¹ He said that he never saw the two end stars in the tail of "Ursa Major" separate. To his eyes they intersected one another.

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can sometimes scarcely hear her low tones. Mrs. Cameron, dark, short, sharp-eyed, one hears very distinctly. I wandered to the book-table where Tennyson joined me. He praised Worsley's *Odyssey*. In a book of Latin versions from his own poetry he found some slips in Lord Lyttelton's Latin *Cytherea Venus*, etc. "Did I find Lymington very dull?" I told him that since coming there I had heard Cardinal Wiseman lecture (on Self-culture), Spurgeon preach, and seen Tom Sayers spar. "More than I have," he remarked. In taking leave he said, "Come to-morrow."

Oct. 4th. I walked over alone to Farringford, found first Mrs. Tennyson, the two boys and their tutor. Tennyson at luncheon. "What do we know of the feelings of insects? Nothing." Tennyson takes me upstairs to his "den" on the top storey, and higher, up a ladder, to the leads. He often comes up here at night to look at the heavens. . . . Then we went down and walked about the grounds, looking at a cedar, a huge fern, an Irish yew. The dark cedar in "Maud," "sighing for Lebanon," he got at Swainston, Sir John Simeon's. . . . We went down the garden, past a large fig-tree growing in the open, "like a breaking wave." Contradictions from him are no way disagreeable: and so to the farmyard. "Have you a particular feeling about a farmyard?" he asked, "a special delight in it? I have. The first time I read Shakespeare was on a hay-stack, *Othello*. I said, 'This man's overrated.' Boys can't understand Shakespeare." We spoke a little of the Shakespeare "Tercentenary," next year. "Most people pronounce 'Arbutus' wrong, with the second syllable long. 'Clematis' too, which should be 'Clē-mātis.'" In the passage, or somewhere near it, I noticed a dusty phial hanging up with some dried brown stuff in it (left by the last owners of Farringford). "It is a Lar," he said, with a twinkle in his eyes. "And what else is it?" I asked. "An old bottle of Ipecacuanha." We looked at the great magnolia stretching up to the roof; then into the hall and saw some fossils. "Man is so small!" he said, "but a fly on the wheel." Mrs. Clough was in the house, and she and I now departed, Tennyson coming with us as far as the little south postern opening on the lane. . . . In parting he said to me, "We shall see you sometimes?" which gladdened me.

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Later. We (W. A. and Rev. W. Barnes, the Dorsetshire poet) drove in a fly to Farringford, where Tennyson, Mrs. Tennyson, Miss Tennyson, met us in the hall. Tennyson and Barnes at once on easy terms, having simple poetic minds and mutual good-will. Talk of "Ancient Britons, barrows, roads," etc. I to upper room to dress, Tennyson comes in to me, and we go down together. Dinner: stories of Ghosts and Dreams. To drawing-room as usual, where Tennyson had his port. Barnes no wine. Tennyson said, "Modern fame is nothing: I'd rather have an acre of land. I shall go down, down! I'm up now. Action and reaction." Tennyson went upstairs by himself. Tea. Enter Mrs. Cameron (in a funny red open-work shawl) with two of her boys. Tennyson reappeared, and Mrs. Cameron showed a small firework toy called "Pharaoh's Serpents," a kind of pastille which when lighted twists about in a wormlike shape. Mrs. Cameron said they were poisonous, and forbade us all to touch. Tennyson in defiance put out his hand. "Don't touch 'em," shrieked Mrs. Cameron. "You shan't, Alfred!" But Alfred did. "Wash your hands then!" But Alfred wouldn't, and rubbed his moustache instead, enjoying Mrs. Cameron's agonies. Then she said to him, "Will you come to-morrow to be photographed?" He, very emphatically, "No!" Then she turned to me, "You left a Great Poet out of *Nightingale Valley*, and have been repenting ever since in sackcloth and ashes, eh?" She meant Henry Taylor. I tried to say that the volume was not a collection of specimens of poets, but she did not listen. Then she said graciously, "Come to-morrow and you shall be taken, and (whispers) you shall see Madonna, eh?" Madonna, otherwise called Island Mary, being one of her pretty servants whom she photographs as the Virgin, etc. This eh! and hm! makes a droll little finish to many of Mrs. Cameron's sentences. She is extremely clever, and good-natured. Tennyson and I went out to the porch with Mrs. Cameron, where her donkey-chair was waiting in the moonlight. We looked at some of her own photographs on the walls, and at one of Henry Taylor. Tennyson said to one of the Cameron boys, "All your mother's geese are swans and all her Taylors are gods!" "What's that?" says Mrs. Cameron, who only heard part; upon which Tennyson repeated the words, introducing them with "Your son says,"

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at which we all laughed, whether the lady enjoyed it or not. But she was candid enough on her part. Tennyson asked her would she photograph Mr. Barnes? But she said "No." She objected to the top of his head.

Tennyson now took Barnes and me to his top room. "Darwinism, Man from Ape, would that really make any difference?" "Time is nothing (said T.): are we not all part or Deity?" "Pantheism," hinted Barnes, who was not at ease in this sort of speculation. "Well," says Tennyson, "I think I believe in Pantheism, of a sort." Barnes to bed, Tennyson and I up ladder to the roof and looked at Orion; then to my room, where more talk. He liked Barnes, he said, "but he is not accustomed to strong views theologic." We talked of Browning, for whom Tennyson had a very strong personal regard. "I can't understand how he should care for my poetry. His new poem has 15,000 lines: there's copiousness! Good night." Bed about 1.

(P. 338.) *Hints for "Enoch Arden" from Edward FitzGerald (1862), in a letter to my mother*

How is it that your note has been unanswered this month or more? Why, a fortnight of the month I didn't see it at all: being away with a sister in Norfolk; and the remaining fortnight? Why I kept thinking I might tell you something about the *fishing* questions you ask me: I mean, about telling you "*anything*" about fishermen, etc. Well, somehow, what little I know on such matters won't turn up on demand: perhaps it would undemanded if you and A. T. were in my boat one summer day on this poor river, or plunging over its bar into the German Seas. Ah! Alfred should never have left his old county with its Mablethorpe sea. As to the definite questions you ask on the subject, I can only answer for the customs in such matters *hereabout*.

1. There is no *apprenticeship* to fishing: any one takes any one who comes handy, etc., even in the *Deep-Sea* fishing, *i.e.* not along the coast, but out to the Dogger bank, Scotland, Ireland, etc. (for cod-fish); any one *may* go who *can* get a berth. Only a little while ago, a lad was telling me at Aldbro'

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how *he* first went, as a boy of 13: he *hid* himself in the *stern* of the boat that was pushing off to the *smack*: and when they were well off shore, he pushed up his head from under ropes, etc., and the "Master" only said, "What! is thee that devil of a boy? You'll be glad enough to be at home again before along!" and so took him out to sea; and now the lad has his 14s. a week (grown to 19 years old) like the rest.

2. "May *fishermen* act as pilots, or must they be of a *Guild* of pilots?" *Yes*, properly: no one is *authorized* to become a pilot, unless he has served his time as *mate* in a *square-rigged vessel* (*i.e.* nothing under a *brig*: even a *schooner* won't do). When he has so served a certain time, he has to pass examinations before (I *think*) the *Trinity Board* and so is admitted or not to be of the *Guild*. But, when all the authorized pilots in a place are exhausted (as will happen when many foreign ships pass, etc.), then a *fisherman* or other *unauthorized* sailor will go: being called a "*Brummagem Pilot*."

Oh dear! this is very learned, very useless, I dare say. But you ask me and I tell my best. I have been almost tempted to write you out some morsels of Dampier's *Voyages* which I copied out for myself: so fine as they are in their way I think, but they would be no use unless A. T. fell upon them by chance: for, of all horses, Pegasus least likes to be dragged to drink. I love Captain Cook too: what fine English his, in the Johnsonian days! I remember, 10 years ago, telling Alfred at Brighton of some poor little verses found in the Prayer-Book of a seafaring son of our old coachman, who died at sea: and Alfred took the pipe out of his blessed old lips to remurmur one, which *Thackeray* pooh-poohed. Along the coast here are many peculiar and fine Scandinavian words, which are not registered even by our provincial glossarists (who have dealt chiefly with the inland husbandman people).

Well, I shan't go on more about this unless you desire some more. About the photographs of A. T., thank you for them: as *you* think one of them very good, I have no doubt it is so: but what becomes of the eyes? I had seen some bigger ones, which made a sort of Rembrandt Burgomaster of him: but in reality I don't much love photographs: though I asked you for one, because I knew they were always going on: and I sincerely thank you for sending me (I dare say) the best.

APPENDIX

This is vile weak scribbling, after two glasses of b-r-n-d-y and water too (Sunday evening).

I saw (in Norfolk) that Yarrell does give that human note to the plover: so I dare say he is right, and my friends on the river here wrong. I see too that Yarrell writes the word "Curlew" as French "*Couvre lieu*" (*I think*), supposed to be from its *cry*. (Query. Will A. T. say anything better than an Aldbro' fisherman said of a boat—(Humph) "Ah!—She go like a *Violin*, she do!")

Some Summer—some Summer day send the old wretch here, where nobody scarce knows his name (don't be angry, Mrs. A. T.), though a duller place is not! but an ugly river

(and a dirty sea)

(and E. F. G.)

which is my poem Q. E. D.

(P.S. Leave the scrap of *Cook* on the floor, in Alfred's way: don't give it him.)

END OF VOL. II

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